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THE REAL RIDE

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Sam Manicom on bikes,  
travel & wild experiences

### READERS' TOURS

- South-East OZ
- Outback Odyssey
- The Bridle Track

### ON TEST

- Triumph Street Triple 660
- Honda VFR800F
- Nolan's 3-in-1 Helmet

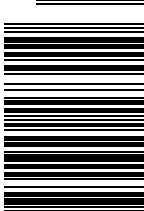


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Beginner's guide  
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# LIVING TO RIDE

**RIDING IS FULL OF LIFE'S GREAT EXPERIENCES**

**M**y parents made a pact when I was a toddler. They'd ensure there was a car waiting for me when I was old enough to get my licence so that I'd never be tempted to even think about buying a motorcycle. When I was almost 17 the car was there alright, but somehow in my psyche I'd already become a motorcyclist. I daydreamed of long, hard rides on mountain roads, of big trips across the country. I was sure I could mentally translate my experience in paddocks into the euphoria of the open road. I got my riding licence on a borrowed bike. The car became a stop-gap while I saved for a bike of my own.

Back-to-back army reserve exercises straight after finishing high school filled my pockets with enough cash to buy a used bike and I was set. Within months I'd traded up to a 900 and set off on the first of a lifetime's worth of motorcycle trips — down to Sydney, up to Queensland, back down into north-western NSW, out to Birdsville, down the Birdsville Track, into the Adelaide Hills, along the Murray and home to country NSW.

The freedom and joy of being behind handlebars on the road to anywhere was as heady as I'd imagined. I was a teenager on a liberating journey. Self-sufficient, self-propelled and self-indulgent. The trip was a defining moment in my life.

Motorcycles will do that.

I had so much fun during that first year of riding. I was so deeply in love with motorcycling that I'd go out for a ride even if it was bucketing down. All my cash went into the bike's fuel tank,



↑ Getting kids involved in motorcycling at an early age makes for less worry in the teenage years!

**It's the same now as it was then: adventures, misadventures, modifications, saving up for the coolest learner-legal bike they can afford, dreaming of the big bike they'll get in a year or two**

unless I was paying for tyres, chains, servicing or repairs. Or speeding fines. It was harder to lose your licence back then. I didn't lose it till the second year. I did all the dumb things, like young blokes do, and even had a few prangs that could have ended up worse than they did.

My friends rode too. Many who didn't weren't friends by the end of the year, not because I didn't like them, but they went their way while we bikers went ours. We all had cheap bikes, we all rode them as much as possible, we bought fixer-uppers and, with the best of intentions, turned them into basket cases. We customised our own bikes, not always in the best taste.

Today I see my daughters' mates getting into it. It's the same now as it was then:

adventures, misadventures, modifications, saving up for the coolest learner-legal bike they can afford, dreaming of the big bike they'll get in a year or two. Good times.

I had to laugh (though not at first!) when one of the young blokes followed us out on the dirt road to our old property. The last bend was one of those that jumps out and takes you by surprise. I looked in the rear-view and saw a cloud of dust come around the corner behind me but no bike. He'd binned it. He was OK, just a bit of bark off and a bent handlebar, but he was so embarrassed it nearly killed him. I didn't rub it in. I'd been there, done that too.

He's since traded the little road-trail bike for a Kawasaki Ninja 300 and I reckon he'll

stick with it. I'm glad I did (not that there was ever any doubt) because motorcycling has led to so many great experiences in my life. I'm stoked that we've got the learner special in this issue. We've not just created it for learners, we've made it so experienced riders can pull it out and give it to someone whose life will be enriched by motorcycles. I bet you know someone ...

— MICK MATHESON

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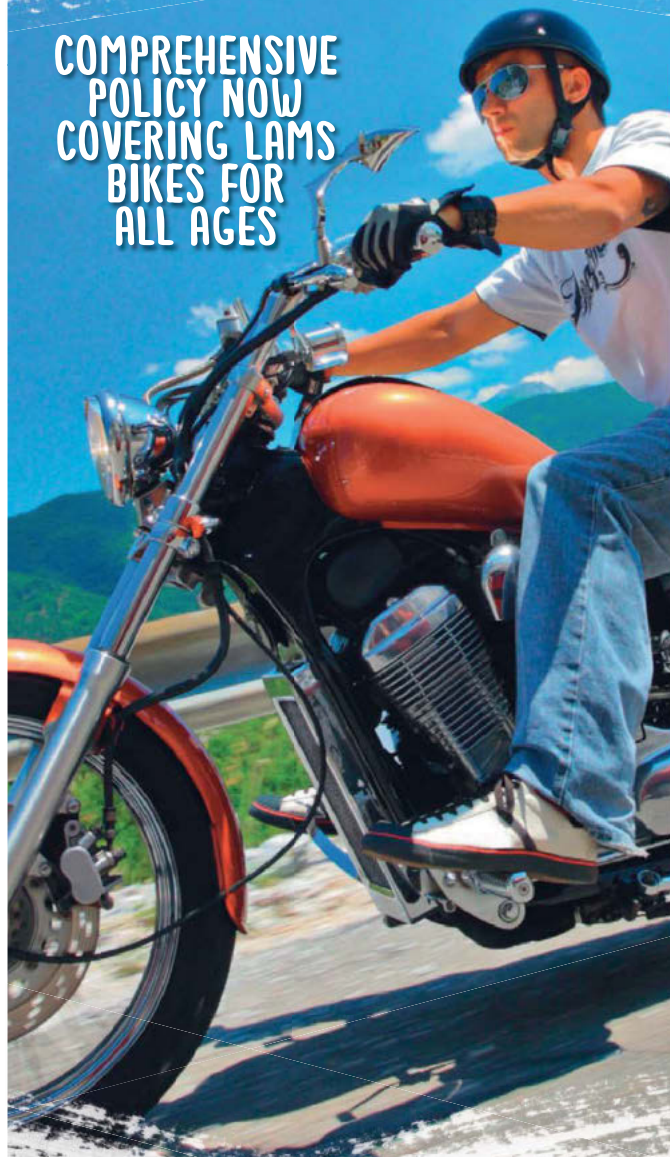
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# AUSTRALIAN **ROADRIDER** THE REAL RIDE

## Editor

Mick Matheson

## Deputy Editor

Matt Shields

## Designer

Shant Safarian

## Photographers

Heather Ware, Anne Baker, Russell Cook, John Churchill, Philip Lalor, Sam Manicom

## Contributors

Charley Boorman, Ariel Hill-Matheson, Mark Hinchliffe, Zoe Naylor, Bill McKinnon, Geoff Seddon, Sam Manicom, Russell Cook, Craig Parker, Philip Lalor

## Editorial

[roadrider@universalmagazines.com.au](mailto:roadrider@universalmagazines.com.au)

## Subscription enquiries

[mailorder@universalmagazines.com.au](mailto:mailorder@universalmagazines.com.au)

## National Sales Manager

Jarryd Muller  
[jmuller@universalmagazines.com.au](mailto:jmuller@universalmagazines.com.au)  
Ph 0413 260 213

## US Advertising Representative

Stacey Swanson  
[marketsas@gmail.com](mailto:marketsas@gmail.com)  
Ph 925 292 9470

## Advertising Production

Ian Cassel

## Publisher

Janice Williams



**Chairman/CEO** | Prema Perera

**Publisher** | Janice Williams

**Chief Financial Officer** | Vicky Mahadeva

**Associate Publisher** | Emma Perera

**Associate Publisher** | Karen Day

**Circulation Director** | Mark Darton

**Creative Director** | Kate Podger

**Editorial Production Manager** | Anastasia Casey

**Print Production Manager** | Lilian Ohanessian

**Prepress Manager** | Ivan Fitz-Gerald

**Marketing & Acquisitions Manager** | Chelsea Peters

Circulation enquiries to our Sydney head office (02) 9805 0399.

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# NEWS FOR ROADRIDERS



■ Kawasaki's Ninja 300 continues to be the top seller

## STEADY ON THE ROAD

**Road bike sales strengthen as off-roaders and scooters struggle**

**L**earners, cruiser riders, adventurers and other road riders helped lift Australian road motorcycle sales by 1.5 per cent to 44,530 last year. Despite ATV sales also being up two per cent to 21,723, total sales of motorcycles, scooters and ATVs were down 2.2 per cent to 111,599 last year due to a 4.3 per cent slump in off-road sales and a big 19.7 per cent drop in scooter sales. Scooters now represent only 6.9 per cent of the total motorcycle market after experiencing a much greater market share only a few years ago.

The increase in Australian road bike sales is mirrored by increases around the world showing the beginnings of a motorcycle sales revival after the GFC slump. The top-selling bike in Australia

was the learner-approved Kawasaki Ninja 300 despite an 18.6 per cent drop in sales to 2897 from 2013. Other top-selling bikes were the Honda CBR500R (1946), Honda CB125E (963), Yamaha XVS650 (914) and KTM 390 Duke (644). As they are all learner-approved, these sales suggest both a new crop of learners and returned riders.

Cruisers also sold well, with Harley-Davidson snaring 8577 sales or 19 per cent of the road bike market and second place behind Honda by a slim 434 bikes. Harley also had the top-selling cruiser as the Softail Breakout finally unseated the XVS650, and the big American scored the remaining eight of the top 10 cruiser spots. It also had the top four touring

bikes. Meanwhile, American cruiser/tourer companies Victory and Indian were just outside the top 10 road bike sellers at 11th and 12th.

Yamaha was a big improver in the road bike market thanks to their Masters of Torque series (MT-07, MT-09) with a 39.9% increase to 5290. BMW also improved its stocks by 25.7% to 2639 thanks to a raft of new models.

Adventure riders also flocked to the growing range of new bikes, with all of the top 10 recording sales increases. They were dominated by three learner bikes — the perennial favourites Kawasaki KLR650, Honda CB500XA and Suzuki DL650A.

Honda was again the top-selling





■ Yamaha's MT-07 has been a success for Yamaha

#### 2014 Road bike Sales by Brand

Honda	9011	(0.1%)
Harley-Davidson	8577	(4.4%)
Kawasaki	5964	(-13%)
Yamaha	5290	(32.6%)
Suzuki	3017	(-19.7%)
Triumph	2855	(-5.7%)
BMW	2639	(25.7%)
Ducati	1988	(12.2%)
KTM	1448	(55.9%)
Hyosung	979	(-1.3%)
CFMoto	576	(-27.9%)

#### 2014 Total Sales

Honda	24,866	(-2.2%)
Yamaha	20,394	(1.5%)
Kawasaki	11,024	(-5.6%)
Suzuki	9745	(-9.9%)
Harley-Davidson	8577	(4.4%)
KTM	7178	(-3.1%)
Polaris	5892	(32.4%)
Triumph	2855	(-5.7%)
BMW	2706	(23.1%)
CFMoto	2254	(-9.7%)

brand in 2014 with 24,866 sales, down 2.2 per cent. It was followed by Yamaha with 18.3 per cent of the market (20,394), Kawasaki with 9.9 per cent (11,024), Suzuki with 8.7 per cent (9745) and Harley-Davidson with 7.7 per cent (8577).

Yamaha led the market for off-road motorcycles with 30.1 per cent (11,356) of the off-road market, followed by Honda with 26.2 per cent (9871), KTM with 15.2 per cent (5730), Suzuki with 11.7 per cent (4417) and Kawasaki with 10.4 per cent (3920).

Polaris finally leapfrogged Honda to the top of the ATV market with a 27.1 per cent share and a massive 32.4 per cent increase to 5892 and seventh outright. Honda had 23 per cent (5007), Yamaha 15.6 per cent (3391), Suzuki 10.2 per cent (2215) and BRP 8.5 per cent (1853).

Piaggio topped the scooters with 16.8 per cent (1295), followed by Vespa 14.8 per cent (1140), Honda 12.7 per cent (977), SYM 8.7 per cent (670) and Kymco 7.2 per cent (550).

## THE FUTURE IS ELECTRIC

**Electric motorcycles to help drive global motorcycle market to 132 million bikes a year by 2018.**

■ Electric superbikes with high-performance drive trains like Mission Motors' machine could be a common sight in the future



Online market research company ReportsnReports.com says global motorcycle demand will rise six per cent a year over the next four years and be worth \$US120 billion in 2018.

The 500-odd-page report says affordability, electric motorcycles, government support and economic growth in emerging markets will

drive bike sales. It says rising wages in industrialising countries will make bikes more affordable, especially in emerging economies such as Brazil, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam.

It also says governments will spur growth by promoting bikes, especially electric bikes, for their low pollution, traffic and parking benefits. The report

predicts a "sharp" rise in sales of electric motorcycles and bicycles outside of China, which is currently leading in this sector.

While North America and Western Europe represented only three per cent of the global motorcycle market in 2013, they accounted for 16 per cent in value because of the popularity of medium and heavy motorcycles and other higher-priced models.

Western Europe and North America are projected to register rapid growth through 2018 as sales of electric models increase sharply and demand for internal combustion engine (ICE) motorcycles rebounds from the large declines posted in recent years.

Since 2008, demand for electric bikes has climbed at double-digit annual rates in many industrialised countries, particularly Germany and the Netherlands. This trend is expected to continue.

The only impediment to growth will be slowing growth in China, the world's leading market for motorcycles and the growth of light vehicles in China and other industrialising countries. It says the Asia/Pacific region, which includes Australia, will be the largest motorcycle market.



# CRASH COURSE

## New research into motorcycle crash causes

**A**ustralian crash data shows there were 192 motorcycle fatalities last year including five pillions, which is down from 213 (12 pillions) in 2013. The bad news is that motorcycle fatalities represented about 16.5 per cent of all road fatalities last year, while bikes are only 4.4 per cent of all registrations. However, it's still an improvement on 2009 when bike fatalities were 18 per cent of all road fatalities and motorcycles were 3.9 per cent of all registrations.

Despite what authorities tell us about riders killing themselves in single-vehicle crashes, the statistics prove the opposite, with only 40 per cent being single-vehicle accidents, down from 49 per cent the previous year.

Deaths fell in most states, except Western Australia, which was up substantially from 25 to 41, but it was also the leader in motorcycle sales increases. Most fatal motorcycle crashes occurred around town, not on highways. Some 89 per cent or 109 of all bike fatalities occurred in speed zones of 70km/h or below and none occurred within the 130km/h speed zones of the Northern Territory.

As expected, the most lethal days to go riding were over the weekend, with Saturday on 42, Sunday 38 and Friday 33, while the safest day was Thursday with 18. Similarly, spring and summer months were the most dangerous and

April the safest month.

Unfortunately, reflecting the growing popularity of riding among women, females represented 10 of the 187 riders who died, compared with seven of 201 last year. The problem with rattling off a raft of crash statistics is that governments looking for simple solutions often reach for simple data to support their draconian legislation to curtail motorcycling.

We all know how statistics can be twisted and distorted to satisfy an agenda. However, there is some light on the horizon. While there has not been a comprehensive investigation of motorcycle crash causes since the famous 1981 Hurt Report, studies in Australia and the US appear to be addressing that issue.

The Australian study by the Monash University Accident Research Centre uses a similar methodology to the Hurt Report, looking at all the factors involved in a crash, not just speed. It also gathers background information about the rider and the riding environment. It will use information from people who have crashed and people who have ridden in the same area and not crashed as a control.

The study has so far recruited 236 participants who have crashed and 535 "control" riders. Results of the study are expected by mid-2015 and the study is supported by the Australian Research

Council, VicRoads, Victoria Police, the TAC, the Department of Justice and the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce.

In the US, a similar study is using crashed riders and control riders to identify which factors lead to safe riding, and which factors lead to crashes and near-crashes.

The joint study by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute also involves reference to data from the MSF 100 Motorcyclists Naturalistic Study of 363,000 miles of riding with data from riders aged 21–80 years.

VTTI director Tom Dingus says the study will help determine the causes of motorcycle crashes so "effective countermeasures of all types can be developed or improved to reduce fatalities".

It not only includes factors present at the time of a crash, but also factors such as the rider's time since their last ride, training history, observed riding capabilities, or observed riding style.

While the results of this study will be used in MSF's training curricula and provided for public information programs, it is not linked into any government group so it will not be the basis of legislation. However, these two reports should provide more focus on crash causes rather than basic reference to simple crash statistics.



↑ Scenes like this are still an all-too-common occurrence on Australia's roads

### Road deaths 2014

Drivers	532	(+35)
Passenger	229	(+27)
Motorcycle riders	187	(-14)
Pedestrians	151	(-6)
Cyclists	45	(-4)
Pillions	5	(-7)

### Motorcycle fatalities by state

NSW	59	(-12)
WA	41	(+16)
Qld	35	(-7)
Vic	30	(-11)
SA	11	(-1)
NT	6	(No change)
Tas	3	(-7)
ACT	2	(No change)



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# CAPTAIN KIRK GOES PUNK

**Star Trek actor and motorcycle fanatic William Shatner has started a company making steampunk motorcycles**

**C**aptain Kirk" will promote the Rivet Motors brand by riding his first custom three-wheeler machine along Route 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles later this year.

Steampunk is a design style that usually blends Art Deco futurist design with steam power, much like the contraptions from a Jules Verne novel. The Canadian actor has created the company in a joint venture with Illinois custom motorcycle company American Wrench after meeting one of its employees in a line waiting to get his autograph.

The first motorcycle, called Rivet One, was built from Shatner's challenging ideas including that the bike should seat two and have a full canopy. Rivet One is powered by a V8 that could be a Corvette but it has not been confirmed.

The design inspiration is the WWII



↑ It looks like it is straight out of Star Trek!

American B-17 Bomber. The trike has a single-sided front swingarm that steers it via two airplane-style throttles and the riveted body is made of hand-formed aluminium like a war plane. Shatner

calls it the "land jet".

Limited versions will be made for public sale, with each made to the customer's specifications. There is no word on price.

## PRINT MY RIDE

**We could soon be printing our own bikes or parts!**

**A** New York artist has built a plastic motorcycle with a 3D printer. New York artist Jonathan Brand has printed out a full-sized replica 1970s Honda CB500 made with translucent plastic on two Ultimaker 3D printers. He couldn't make the motorcycle in one unit so he produced the parts and glued them all together. It took more than a year to complete.

While the bike is just a plastic model,

South African designer Hans Fouche has produced a plastic mower to which he has added an electric motor and blades so that it actually works.

He produced it on a large 3D printer he developed which is the size of a garage and able to print large objects at 12 times the speed and at 10 per cent of the cost of a common desktop 3D printer.

Home 3D printers now cost less than

\$200, but they only make items out of plastic, which is fine for custom builders and restorers who may want to produce a plastic item that is difficult to obtain or uniquely designed.

Soon we could also be able to afford a metal 3D printer so we can make engine parts and other components after Michigan Technical University researchers built a 3D metal printer they say will cost less than \$1500.



■ The mower in action



■ While it lacks colour and flair, everything is there!





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# EAGLE IS LANDING ELSEWHERE

America's top motorcycle travel company, EagleRider, has celebrated its first year in Australia with plans to expand its stores and fleet. EagleRider Australia started with just Santina Keith, Will Keith and Simon Gobran, who were already involved with Harley-Davidson and "wanted to do something more fun", says Santina.

**"Riding in Australia is amazing and we wanted to share that experience with people from all over the world"**

"Riding in Australia is amazing and we wanted to share that experience with people from all over the world. We met with EagleRider in Los Angeles and never looked back."

It took them a couple of years to work out the details, but EagleRider Australia is now the master franchise for the country and has had stores in Sydney and Brisbane for the past year and now a third in Mackay.

"We have plans to expand across the country to every major city," Santina says. "At the moment we have a national fleet of about 40 Harley-Davidson motorcycles

↓ Eagle Rider is bringing its enormous expertise to Australia



but plan to expand that fleet and to add other brands as we are often asked about Triumph, BMW and Indian rentals."

EagleRider offers guided tours from all three locations that include bikes, fuel, accommodation, chase vehicles and guides. You can view their tours and bikes on their website.

Santina says their customers come from all over the world. "We joke that it is

often like the United Nations around here as we may have Swiss, Russian, Chinese, American and Aussie customers at the rental counter at one time. Our bikes go out for any length of time and any distance as we offer unlimited kilometres. Our longest rental so far was 43 days and he went more than 16,000km. He had great stories to tell and even made a friend in Tennant Creek in the NT."

## AVOID THE STORM

**Be wary of cheap, storm-damaged motorcycles**

Vicious hail storms damage hundreds of motorcycles every summer and many can wind up back in sales yards around the country at heavily discounted prices. Some still have dents in their tanks, smashed fairings, broken lights, indicators and mirrors, while others may be repaired.

They may be an attractive option for riders who want a cheap utilitarian motorcycle for use as a courier, adventure bike or cheap commuter and aren't concerned with what it looks like. But the RACQ has warned riders to do their homework before deciding on buying a hail-damaged bike.

"Think about what you intend to do with it," says RACQ technical manager Steve Spalding. "If it's to fix it, then factor

in the cost of repairs. If the discount off the purchase price, plus the cost of repairs, doesn't work out cheaper than its normal selling price, then think carefully before jumping in on a hail sale."

Another trap is the fact that some insurance companies may not offer full insurance cover if a vehicle is hail-damaged and unrepaired. It's best to check with your insurer before committing to a purchase.

"If you do decide to buy a hail-damaged bike and fix the damage, make sure you carefully inspect it first so that you can properly factor in all of the repair costs," advises Steve. "Also check whether the parts you need are available or if there are lengthy delays in supplying these parts."

Storm damage can be more than just dents and smashed lights, which are easy to see. If there has been flash flooding, the bike could also have been submerged. That can mean long-term corrosive damage to electrics, which can be expensive to repair. Steve advises that such damage can be difficult to spot and could have issues with warranty.

"Check with the selling dealer if any hail damage will affect the bike's new warranty cover, particularly if there are future problems related to water entry into electronics," he says. His advice is to be wary. "End-of-year sales often lead to some attractive offers; it may be better to wait for these rather than buy a hail-damaged bike."

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# BONHAM'S BONANZA

**S**teve McQueen's reputation and the collectability of classic British motorcycles were highlights of the annual Bonhams motorcycle auction in Las Vegas. A 1950 Vincent Series C "White" Shadow — one of just 15 produced — became the most valuable Vincent Shadow when it sold for \$224,250. Another Vincent, a 1949 Touring Rapide with Blacknell Bullet sidecar, became the most valuable post-war Rapide when it sold for \$126,500.

Other classic British bikes to achieve world records included a restored 1936 Brough Superior SS80 with Watsonian



■ Steve McQueen's 1912 Harley-Davidson X8E Big Twin sold for \$117,300



■ 1950 Vincent Series C "White" Shadow

**"A 1950 Vincent Series C 'White' Shadow — one of just 15 produced — became the most valuable Vincent Shadow when it sold for \$224,250"**

Sport sidecar and a 1962 Matchless G50 that helped carry legendary American racer Dick Mann to his championship. They each sold for \$115,000. Hollywood actor Steve McQueen still wields some selling power in the motorcycle world with his 1912 Harley-Davidson X8E Big Twin selling for \$117,300.

A 1990 Honda RC30 caused an auction sensation when it was the subject of a fierce bidding war between Aussie and UK collectors. The Poms won with a price of \$52,900, creating a world auction



↑ This RC30 sold for \$52,900

record for the model.

Other British motorcycles that achieved impressive prices were a 1938 Brough Superior SS100 at \$280,000, an ex-Sid Biberman 1950 Vincent Series C Black Shadow at \$112,700, a 1950 Vincent Series C Black Shadow barn find at \$103,500, a 1955 Vincent Black Prince at \$79,350, the ex-Jimmy Guthrie 1961 Francis Beart Norton Manx at \$75,900, and a 1956 Ariel Square Four MkII with Watsonian sidecar at \$50,600.

## CLOCKED ROUNDING THE BLOCK

A 75-year-old British pensioner has copped a licence ban and fine after being clocked at 132km/h in a 50km/h zone while test-riding a Suzuki. Brian Tyson has been riding motorcycles since he was 17 but has now decided to give it up after pressure from his family.

The Welsh court fined him \$1125, plus \$225 court costs and disqualified him from driving for 28 days.



■ Gotcha!



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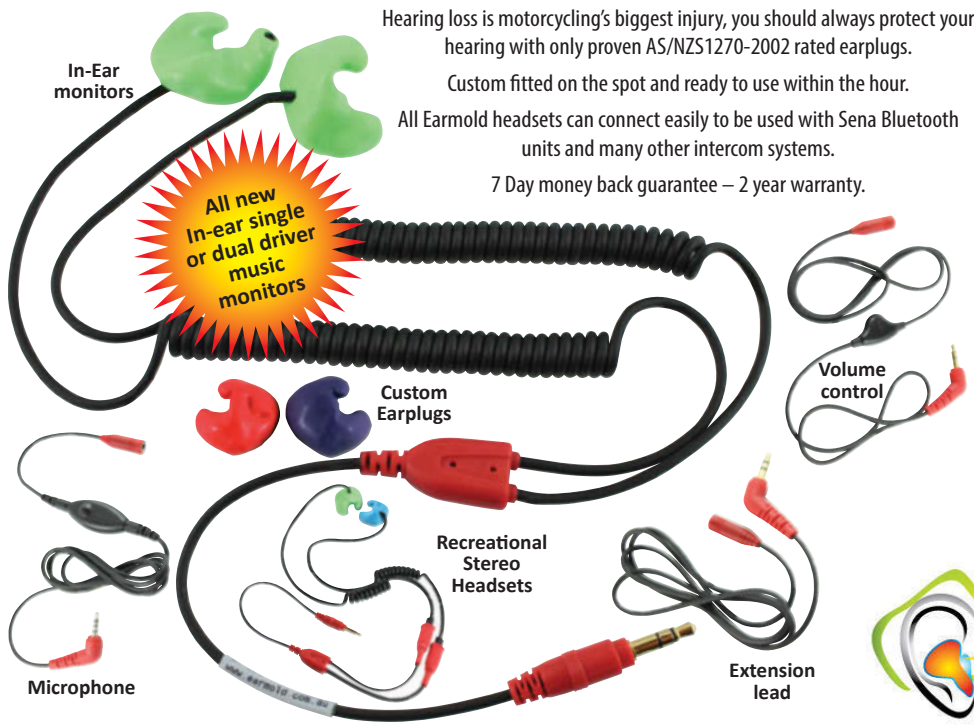


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# HARLEY BUYS STURGIS

**S**ponsorship deals don't usually make the news, but it does when Harley-Davidson signs a 75-year deal to be the official bike of the Sturgis Rally.

The annual rally in South Dakota is the world's biggest motorcycle rally, attracting a record of 660,000 in 2000 and expecting to host one million riders for its 75th anniversary this August.

It's also significant because fellow American cruiser companies Victory and Indian have made Sturgis their choice for the launch of significant new models in the past couple of

years. In 2013, Sturgis was the venue for the world launch of the rebranded Indian Chief under the new ownership of Polaris, which also owns Victory Motorcycles. Last year, Indian launched the new Scout at Sturgis and has made no bones about using Sturgis as its annual platform for significant product launches.

Harley had always considered it was the de facto official bike of the festival, with Hogs dominating the streets, even though the rally is open to all makes. Indian also has some claim to the

historical significance of the event as it was an Indian store that started the rally 75 years ago.

However, the new agreement between the town of 6000 people and Harley-Davidson has an initial term and renewals running until 2090, preventing competitors from receiving similar lucrative deals.

As part of the agreement, the company will build a permanent plaza on Main Street that will be the hub of festivities. It will include a stage for concerts, weddings and other non-rally events.

To mark the event's 75th anniversary, 75 bricks from the Harley-Davidson Museum, the Milwaukee headquarters and famous motorcycle-only parking area will be delivered to Sturgis and integrated into the plaza.

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**"It's also significant because fellow American cruiser companies Victory and Indian have made Sturgis their choice for the launch of significant new models in the past couple of years"**





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# ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLES WITH NO BATTERIES?

**E**lectric motorcycles are hindered by the size and weight of conventional batteries, but the answer could be in lightweight supercapacitors built into the bodywork.

The Queensland University of Technology nanotechnology scientists are working on supercapacitors which they believe could one day replace batteries in electric vehicles. Research leader, professor Munzio Motta, says supercapacitors can deliver more energy in bursts, which would be great for acceleration.

Supercapacitors are a thin, light and strong film made of two all-carbon electrodes sandwiched around an electrolyte. They could easily be placed within the bodywork of a sportsbike. A drawback is that they don't store a

---

**“We are making rapid advances all the time and they are feasible for use in electric motorcycles”**

lot of charge so you need a lot of them. Munzio says that at the moment they would be more practical in cars with large panels and surface area.

“But we are making rapid advances all the time and they are feasible for use in electric motorcycles,” he says. “I’ve just received an email of a paper in which they claim they found a new way of holding the charge. It’s all a work in progress.” Another advantage of supercapacitors over batteries is that

they charge more quickly.

Perhaps the answer is a combination of battery and supercapacitors to give electric motorcycles more range and faster charging. These have been the two biggest hurdles for the introduction of electric vehicles.

Postdoctoral research fellow Dr Jinzhang Liu says they hope supercapacitors will one day store more energy than a lithium-ion battery while retaining the ability to release its energy up to 10 times faster. He says he can see the day when they provide electric vehicles with the same range as petrol-powered vehicles.

The team’s results are published in the *Journal of Power Sources and Nanotechnology*.

---

# WORLD-FIRST RETURNED-RIDER COURSE FOR SA

**S**outh Australia is believed to be the first place in the world to offer free courses for returned mature-aged riders. Motorcycle advocate Nev Gray was one of the first to undergo the one-day rider tests, which began in February.

“For about 11 years we have been pushing for returner riders to enter some sort of rider training as they are crashing way out of their zone,” he says. Nev believes it is a world first because it is offered free and he hopes it will be mirrored by others states. The ACT runs a masters course for returned riders, but it is subsidised, not free. The one-day course will be conducted at the RideSafe

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**“The free one-day course will be conducted at the RideSafe Range and will include an on-road component”**

Range and will include an on-road component.

“South Australia is motorcycle heaven,” Nev says, referring not only to the returned rider course, but also the strong relations between riders and the authorities. He says the South Australian motorcycling community has been granted \$6.5m by the state

government for motorcycle safety and infrastructure improvements, such as lower rub rails on the barriers in the Adelaide Hills. “Basically it’s for anything that motorcycle riders would like done,” he says. “It just came out of the blue and there it was.”

Nev is a member of the Motorcycle Reference Group (MRG), which started in 2003 as the Motorcycle Taskforce. It includes representatives of motorcycle groups, the RAA, government, transport department and the police. Nev represents the Ulysses Club and Motorcycle Riders Association of South Australia in the MRG.

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## RIDERS ARE BETTER

**Pommie police reveal profound truth**

**M**otorcyclists are better motorists than drivers so more people should be encouraged to ride, says the British Association of Chief Police Officers in a report to the UK government.

Rather than deterring riders, as most authorities seem to do, or legislating for learner riders to first hold a car licence for a year (as in Queensland), the joint report with the Motorcycle Industry Association suggests the reverse is true.

“There is a growing body of evidence which shows that if more people started

their road careers on a motorcycle, scooter or moped, this would lead to improvements in driver behaviour towards all vulnerable road users,” says an MIA statement released with the report. “It is also acknowledged that motorcyclists make better road users when driving cars.”

It’s nothing new. The report cites a Belgian report delivered last year to a London road safety conference, which says the more bikes on the road, the safer our roads would be.

The UK police and motorcycle industry document calls for motorcycles to be included in mainstream transport policy, education for all road users, compulsory road user awareness lessons at schools

and post-test training for all motorists.

Calls for motorists to ride before they drive have been echoed in Australia by Liberal senator Cory Bernardi, who is a member of the Friends of Motorcycling parliamentary group. He wants all learner drivers to be taught how to handle a motorbike as well — even if they don’t intend to ride one — to teach drivers the perils of the road for bikers and their vulnerability to cars and trucks.

MotoDNA director of coaching Mark McVeigh says it’s a great idea for learner drivers to spend time on a motorbike to improve road-safety awareness.

“The ideal training would be a one-day course which we could put together very quickly with our existing program,” he says.





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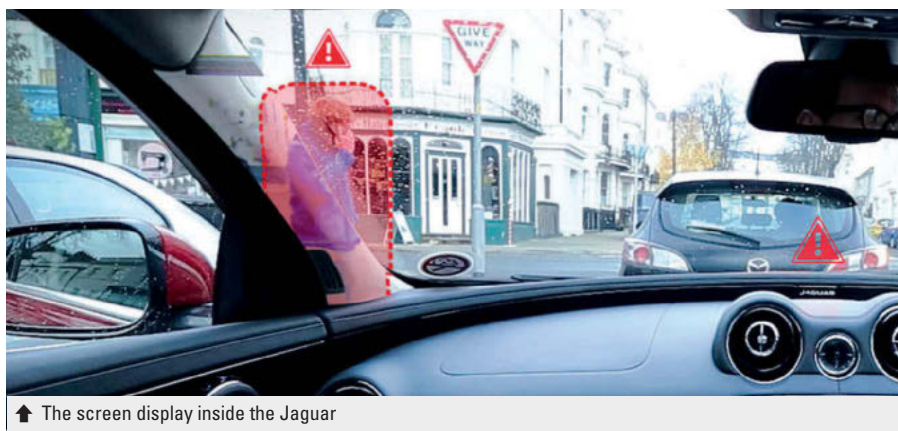
# CAR TECH FOR RIDERS

**J**aguar/Land Rover is the latest car company to develop technology that could prove safer for riders. The company is working on a range of new technologies they call "Bike Sense" that uses unconventional warnings, including a "tap" on the shoulder, to alert drivers of potential collisions with motorbikes and bicycles.

This follows the recent unveiling of the company's "invisible" pillars prototype that uses cameras on the outside of the car to project images onto the A, B and C pillars inside the car so they become virtually invisible. This allows drivers to see vulnerable road users such as motorcyclists. It also follows Volvo's technology that alerts drivers of vulnerable road users via a two-way communication between the car and a rider's helmet.

The only problem with all this car technology is that it could lull drivers into a false sense of security and awareness so that they stop actually looking for riders. The latest Jag tech, called "Bike Sense", uses sensors on the car to detect and identify bicycles and motorbikes. Bike Sense then makes the driver aware of the potential hazard with unconventional warnings, including a "tap" on the shoulder by a lever on the car seat.

Drivers would also get a matrix of LED



↑ The screen display inside the Jaguar

**"The only problem with all this car technology is that it could lull drivers into a false sense of security and awareness so that they stop actually looking for riders"**

warning lights on the windowsills and the sound of a motorcycle horn or bicycle bell through the car's audio system. It would even be mixed into the audio's surround-sound speakers to indicate which direction the bike is approaching from — left, right, front or rear.

If the driver was in a street with a lot of motorbikes, cycles or pedestrians, the system would prioritise the nearest hazards so the driver is not overwhelmed or distracted by warning lights, sounds

and shoulder taps.

Bike Sense will also identify hidden hazards such as a rider obscured by a parked vehicle. If the driver ignores all the warnings and accelerates, Bike Sense vibrates and stiffens the pedal. It will also help prevent vehicle doors being opened into the path of bikes when the vehicle is parked by warning all passengers of an approaching cyclist, motorbike or car. If anyone opens the door, the handle will light up, vibrate and buzz as an alert.

## Modern-Day Monkey

**Is Honda's Grom coming to Australia?**

**A** small and fun commuter bike that has wowed the Yanks may soon be coming to Australia. The 125cc Honda Grom has been a surprisingly popular bike in America, even winning a Motorcycle of the Year award from one of the country's

leading publications along the way.

The Honda Grom was introduced in 2013 but has still not made it to Australia, despite Honda MPE here evaluating it. Honda MPE marketing manager Glyn Griffiths believes it would sell in Australia and has been trying to get it here. There certainly is some enthusiasm for the bike here, with an Australian Facebook page devoted to the quirky commuter bike.

The radical-looking commuter looks like a monkey bike on steroids and is reminiscent of Honda's popular CT and ST mini-bikes from the '60s, '70s and '80s. In the US it sells

for just \$2999.

The stumpy Honda Grom features a low 754mm seat, a super-light 102kg low centre of gravity, 124.9cc single-cylinder four-stroke engine, fat 12in tyres, disc brakes, four-speed transmission, halogen headlight and LED taillight.

Despite being a compact bike, it has rider ergonomics to suit most adult sizes and with its low weight, is easy to throw around. Even though it only has a 3.8L fuel tank, Honda claims range is 160km, making it one frugal little commuter.

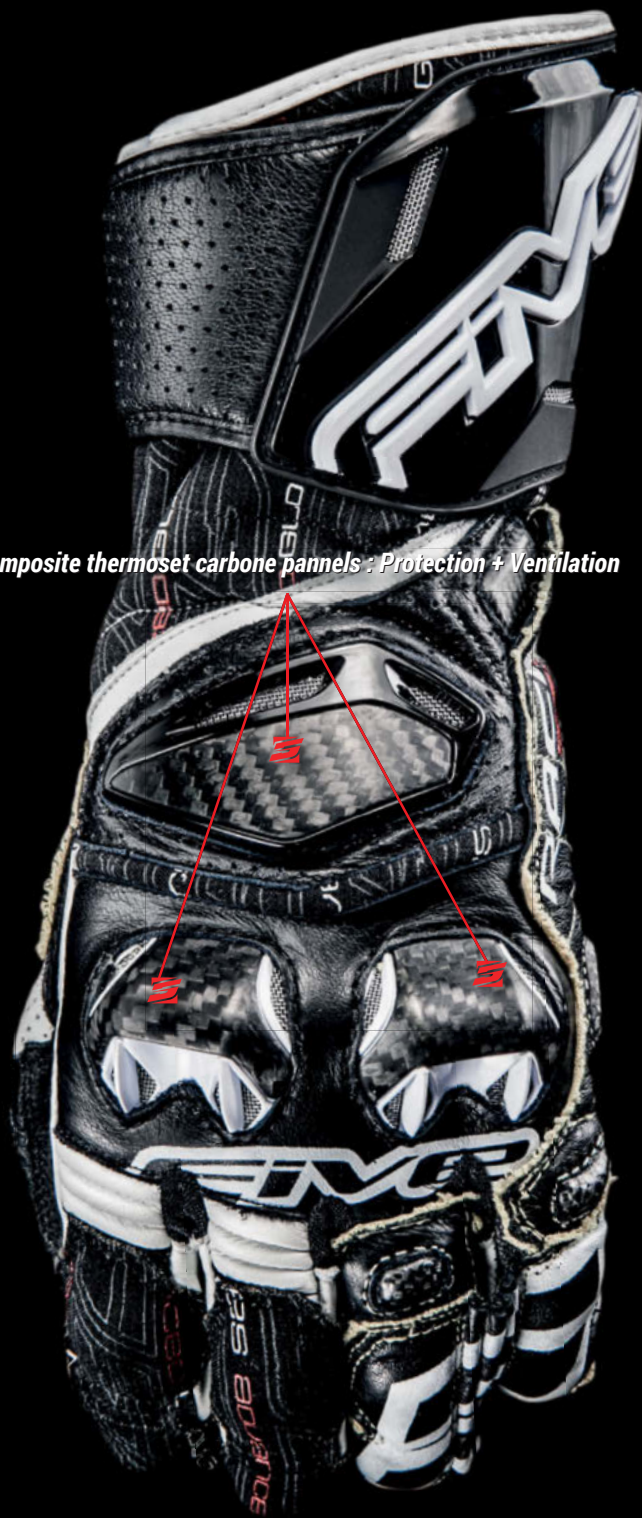
With the Learner-Approved Motorcycles Scheme (LAMS) market growing in leaps and bounds in Australia, it would be a great addition to the Honda line-up.



■ Looks like a kid's bike, but it is for the kid inside the licensed road rider ...

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# POLARIS SPARKS UP

**E**lectric Indian and Victory motorcycles could be a possibility now that Polaris Industries has gone from being an investor in Brammo since 2011 to the shock owner of the Oregon-based electric motorcycle business.

Polaris now plans to invest heavily in Brammo to develop new models, electric motors and batteries. It will also begin making Brammo electric motorcycles later this year in its Spirit Lake, Iowa, factory where they also make Global Electric Motorcars (GEM) and Goupil electric golf cart-style vehicles.

CEO Scott Wine says they have collaborated with Brammo on several projects in motorcycles, off- and on-road vehicles and are committed to electric vehicles with lithium-ion batteries, but also developing "leading electric drivetrain technology. We anticipate a return on these investments and believe the new alignment brings us that much closer to delivering world-class electric solutions across our products," he says.

His statement seems to indicate electric versions of its Victory or Indian motorcycles, which would make sense in the wake of Harley-Davidson's Project Livewire electric motorcycle concept unveiled last year.

Polaris Australia marketing manager

**"We anticipate a return on these investments and believe the new alignment brings us that much closer to delivering world-class electric solutions across our products"**

Adrian Givoye would not comment on "non-traditional" motorcycle manufacture, but hints at more Indian and Victory conventional models this year. He says Polaris has a "long-term strategic" view and was "obtaining EV knowhow and capability" to be prepared for a market switch to electric power.

Polaris and Harley aren't the only traditional manufacturers finally getting into the electric market. BMW last year launched an electric scooter, Yamaha is building two electric bikes, KTM has developed an electric trials bike and Bultaco is returning to the market with an electric bike.

Adrian also wouldn't comment on the business arrangements for distribution in Australia of Brammo bikes, which has only recently been taken over by importers ElectroMotive Force. ELMOFO managing director Brett Sutherland says he has been in regular contact with Brammo over the past few months and is not sure how it will affect their distribution deal.

"The expectation is that Polaris

would want to keep the international distributors as it can be difficult to find the right fit for this sort of product," he says. "Regular motorcycle dealers tend not to push electrics over their regular bikes. Brammo knows how to build a great electric powertrain and Polaris knows how to build bikes in a cost-efficient manner. So hopefully this will result in some future cost-effective Polaris/Brammo electric bikes. If not, the bikes we have will become collectors' items, which would be a shame."

The Empulse R model costs \$19,350 (plus on-roads) and the base model is \$16,670. Both models have 40kW of power, while the R has 90Nm of torque and the standard has 63Nm. They have a 10.2kWh lithium-ion battery which takes eight hours to recharge on an American 120V main, but will be a lot quicker on our 240V system. It comes with a 3kW on-board charger.

Range is about 200km in the city and 90km on the highway, or 129km combined, and all electric bikes in Australia are learner-approved.



■ Brammo's purchase by Victory could signal the birth of electric touring in style

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**PHOTO:** Mick Matheson





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# LETTER HOME TO BLIGHTY ...



## Listen to a pom's perspective of Australia as Charley writes home to a bike club about his trip across Australia

the world's largest island and the smallest continent. Most people live on the edge — in more ways than one! — and the middle bit is pretty empty. The whole lot is great for bikes! Oh, and there are sharks, crocs, spiders and snakes ... but all very friendly.

We've been riding along twisty gravel for the first part of the trip from Sydney to the outback and had an absolute blast. As usual we're all Beemered up, with a collection of BMW GS 1200s, 800s and 650s — while I'm on my trusty GSA Adventure. Many of the riders quiz me on why I choose to ride the big Adventure bike, especially when we're in gravel and sandy tracks etc. My answer is always the same — and it's not some corporate speak — just my thoughts and experience: this bike is the best all-round adventure bike ever made. I can take the GSA across high-speed gravel roads, throw it hard into twisty gravel tracks and even plough it through pretty horrible sand. I know that the bike is so well balanced and handles so well that it will always deliver. After that I can ride at top cruising speeds along a highway for hours on end without getting a numb bum!

It's tried and tested — it's not a flash-in-the-pan market-follower bike. People

are truly amazed when they see first hand what this bike can do off-road and how it performs on fast tarmac against a sportsbike. On top of this, it can do thousands of miles across ball-breaking corrugated tracks — and not fall apart if you do drop it off-road. When we do it usually escapes with a few scratches and



**H**i guys,  
Charley here sipping a cold drink as I look over the iconic Sydney Harbour in Australia.

We've been here a few weeks now and probably have another month to go before I get back to dear old Blighty.

I'm out here with my old mate — very old and wrinkly — Billy Ward, riding across Australia with a group of bikers. It's a similar bike tour to the one we run in Africa in that we have two big adventures: one primarily on gravel tracks, while the other is 95 per cent tarmac. We are just trying to meet everyone's needs!

Australia has it all. I've been here many times and of course for those of you who remember, I filmed *By Any Means* here a few years ago. It's a country of about 24 million people, all living on an island of 7.5 million square kilometres. In fact it's

## REMEMBERING ANDY CALDECOTT

Charley came back to Australia in March for his annual adventure ride into the outback from Sydney, but made a special trip to the National Motor Museum in Birdwood on March 17th. Some of you may be aware that Andy Caldecott, one of Australia's best off-road racers, was killed in the 2006 Dakar Rally, the same year that Charley attempted the Dakar for his *Race to Dakar* TV series. Andy's bike is at the Birdwood Museum and Charley came to meet with Andy's family to help remember this great Australian rider. Check out Charley's website for details or see the museum's site at <http://motor.history.sa.gov.au>.

still gets you to your destination. And now of course, the new water-cooled version is out and I just can't wait to own one.

We left Sydney a few weeks ago and headed northwest into the beginnings of the Australian outback. Sleeping in sheep and cattle stations, you get a real feeling for the roots of Australia — and its sheer size. The outback is the essence of Australia and with some fascinating places to visit each day.

We ended up staying a few days in the Flinders Ranges. This is a spectacular mountain range in South Australia that dates back about 800 million years. We visited one of its wonders, the natural amphitheatre of Wilpena Pound. We parked the bikes and took a light aircraft flight right over the top of it. It looks like they could have filmed *Jurassic Park* here and you half expect to see a dinosaur emerge from the trees.

Everywhere we went there were incredible sights to see and things to do. It's a great combination of riding and touring. What better way to see Australia than on a bike? Australia has a long history of adventurers. You had to be one to live here back in those days, come to think of it. There was a very famous guy called Frank Birtles who peddled his way around Australia, into the "Dead Heart" of the country — the place where nobody went — the oven. This was in the late 1800s and early 1900s. He'd just jump on his bicycle and ride for thousands of kilometres into the unknown, with no idea where he'd get water (one of the



biggest challenges) and with no hope of help. He was a bit full on and became a real pioneer out here. Eventually he became the first person to drive a car from London to Sydney.

The guys who have been riding with us are from all over the world — the US and Canada, the UK, Holland and a handful of Aussies, including a couple of expats. It's all about the people I think. The ride's great, but the social aspect of the trip is key. Each night we're somewhere different and there's all the bar talk about the day's ride and the near misses — bearing in mind the biggest dangers over here aren't crocs, snakes or spiders, but the suicidal kangaroos who wait for hours at the side of the road to end it all under your front wheel. I've never seen so much road kill. You can even smell it as you ride along — hot weather and dead kangaroos produce a certain Ozzy outback aroma ...

After the outback we headed to Tasmania. It was a big change from sandy gravel tracks to unbelievable black twisty tarmac. The trip over on the ferry was fun and I was surprised as to how many people recognised me. Many came over to say hi and take a few pics. An easy overnight crossing of the Bass Strait and we were ready for action in the foggy coastal town of Devonport in the morning.

We changed from knobbies to road tyres now and I can honestly say I've never experienced such consistently incredible roads for literally hundreds of miles. We've all got a favourite section of tarmac twisties in the UK, maybe a 20km or 30km section, but in Tassie we're talking a full day of pure biker twisty heaven. It just goes on and on. And I'm not talking tatty crumbly tarmac. I'm talking smooth, safe, black snakey roads that you can read and ride confidently.

The group is just blown away by Tasmania, its beauty and the people. They have a quite famous rally here, the Targa Tasmania Rally. Eric Bana, one of Australia's A-listers, decided to do the event in a car that he and his dad built when he was a young man — he wrecked it. But he produced a true grit documentary about the experience, called *The Beast*. The DVD documents the build, the love and tears that went into this effort — and the subsequent regret when it all went wrong. If you get a minute, watch the DVD. It's great.

OK, that's enough from me at the moment guys. If you'd like to find out more about my adventure bike tours in Australia or Africa, please check out my website — all the information is there at [charleyboorman.com](http://charleyboorman.com). Next big adventure tour is Africa in August.

For now, keep the rubber side down. **ARR**

*Well, did Charley get it right? Could we use him on the Australian Tourist board? Let him know. Send us your comments and we'll pass them on.*

## RIDE WITH CHARLEY ACROSS AFRICA

Each year, Charley takes a group of people across Southern Africa. They ride BMWs from Cape Town up into Namibia, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Lesotho before returning back to Cape Town. Riders can do the whole adventure or a section of it. Check out the details and learn more at Charley's website, [www.charleyboorman.com](http://www.charleyboorman.com).



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**GEOFF SEDDON**

# RIDE TO LIVE

## Why crash when you ride to, well, ride ...

I last crashed a bike in December 1985, seven hours into an overnight ride down the Hume to Broadford in Victoria. Fatigue, rain and roadworks combined somewhere south of Wodonga to put my Ducati on its arse as a Kenworth whizzed past inches from my mud-splattered boots. My best mate was travelling behind on a Triumph and thought I was a goner, already dreading the phone call to Stephanie and the kids. I vowed I'd never crash again and so far, so good.

It's the first and last rule of motorcycling. I recently spent a short spell in hospital, getting some hardware removed from my leg. It was the legacy of a drag racing accident involving a hot rod, but all the doctors and nurses assumed I'd hurt myself in a motorbike crash. Quite the contrary, I said, motorcycles are perfectly safe if you don't crash them.

Not long after I didn't die on the road to Broadford, I started testing motorcycles for *Two Wheels*. Testing and crashing bikes go hand in hand, at least for some. Years later, when I boasted to then editor John Rooth that I'd never crashed a test bike, he said it was because I never rode one fast enough. Yep.

As our children got old enough for sport, my better half would bundle up the girls into our only car for netball, while number-one son scored a pillion seat for soccer. His team-mates were jealous but the appeal soon waned

after a couple of wet winter mornings. But there's nothing like having a nine-year-old on the back to clear the safety goggles. You just don't crash, it is not an option.

I'm surprised the Department of Community Services van didn't arrive to whisk young Tom away, such was the reaction of some who thought I was risking his life every Saturday, including many motorcycle riders. What they would think of my neighbour Geoff is anyone's guess; he'd strap his little one on his BMW with a big leather belt around them both so she wouldn't fall off when she fell asleep. He never crashed either.

Stray animals, incompetent drivers, road works and even motorcycle riders who can't stay in their own lanes can be accommodated if your total focus is safety. I take the same attitude when I ride down to

my local shop in summer in a t-shirt, jeans and sneakers. If I put my mind to it, I can ride 6km without crashing, but from the deathly stares I get from other riders, it seems I'm in a minority. Many motorcyclists equate protective clothing with safety, but not crashing is even safer.

Having said that, I always otherwise suit up with jacket, boots and gloves and have recently scored some Kevlar jeans. There are few things I like better than riding fast with long-time mates, and it's a totally different mindset to pillioning kids. I still don't want to crash, but I'm there to have fun and ride my bike as well as I can, often at speeds far beyond the posted limit. The potential for something to go wrong is much greater, but the risks are minimised by never letting my ego or the rush of the moment overtake my ability or the conditions. If

the pack has to wait for me at the next stop, so be it.

I am often approached by young people for advice when they get their first bike. Some I actively discourage, mostly high risk takers looking for a thrill, but also those who are flat out driving a Corolla. Two of my kids ride bikes, one off-road and the other a postie bike in the city. Both were already good safe drivers, equal parts cautious and smooth, and they are well versed in the first and last rules of motorcycling.

Having recently turned 60, I am conscious that my vision, stamina and reflexes aren't what they were. I am also aware that the consequences of an accident would be more serious, my body less able to survive the trauma and recover quickly. So if I'm not getting any quicker, it's because I don't crash. Touch wood. **ARR**

**"If the pack has to wait for me at the next stop, so be it"**





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ZOE NAYLOR

# LIVE TO WORK

## A day out riding and a chat over lunch were the catalysts for Diane Scaysbrook to make her passion her work

**N**early 10 years ago, Diane Scaysbrook met Selena Thurbon. As well as holding down other jobs, both were presidents of motorcycle clubs. Selena had just started Girls Ride Out and Diane was president of the Ducati Owners Club of NSW. One fateful day they went for a ride together and got chatting.

Selena had just left the corporate world and bought a motorcycle rental business called BikeEscape, as well as a small fashion label called BikieChic. At the time, BikieChic consisted of just a few men's t-shirts. One happened to have the words bikiechic written on it. Over lunch, Selena shared with Diane how she wanted to do more designs in that vein and Diane, having a background as

a fashion teacher, jumped right in. It was a light bulb moment. Selena suggested they go into partnership and the rest, you can say, is history.

They are now both pursuing their passion. I caught up with Diane to chat about BikieChic and her service project, BikieChic Adventures.

**DS:** When we went into partnership we must have had only five to 10 garments in the first range. The Sydney Motorcycle Show was happening and we virtually sold out of everything we had.

**ARR:** Very cool. What's it like doing a job that's your passion? Does it feel like work or does it just feel like fun?

**DS:** No, it doesn't feel like work. Therefore you're thinking about it seven days a week. You

don't mind doing it at night — researching new products and drawing new designs. You don't mind doing it all the time because you love it so much.

**ARR:** So what sort of advice could you share with our readers on how to find your passion?

**DS:** Well, I ask women what's your passion and many say they don't know. Some people never find out. A business that is your passion is bound to be a success. So you really have to think hard about yourself and what you like doing. Sometimes you might think x or y might be ok, but more often than not, it's along the lines of what other people would like you to do. When you think of something YOU want to do, it's simply a matter of putting it into action.

**ARR:** Some people are lucky to stumble upon their passion, but I think that we go so fast in the society that we live in. It's really important to take some time out to discover what you truly love.

**DS:** Yes — that was even the case for me when I expanded into another business venture. When I finally stepped down from being president of the Ducati Owners Club, several years after we had been doing BikieChic, I recall saying to Selena, "Now that I have some more hours to myself, what am I going to do?" I remember feeling that it would have to be something really, really good. Something I could feel totally inspired by. That's

when I came up with the idea that I am going to do more for women's motorcycling. That's how BikieChic Adventures was formed. I thought, we are going to take women away for the weekend on their motorcycles and they're all going to meet up and become great friends. And I did it, and it's been fantastic.

**ARR:** I believe that once you step into your heart song and your passion, things start to unfold in your life.

**DS:** Absolutely! I don't make any money out of the adventures — it's just something I love to do. I love all these women meeting other women motorcyclists. After the four years of doing this, so many women have become great mates and created a huge network of women they can call on.

**ARR:** That's awesome! That's being of real service to the community, one of the other age-old traditions for the key to creating lasting happiness. BikieChic is the income and BikieChic Adventures is the heart-based service arm of it all. It can be lonely for women in this world. For example, if you've got young kids you're often home alone. The man's off working. You're creating a pathway to creating connection — where people feel supported and part of something. How marvellous! **ARR**

For more information about BikieChic or for BikieChic Adventures go to [silverhorse.com.au](http://silverhorse.com.au).

**"Selena shared with Diane how she wanted to do more designs in that vein and Diane, having a background as a fashion teacher, jumped right in."**



↑ Diane (left) and Selena (right) from BikieChic — two ladies that live to work!



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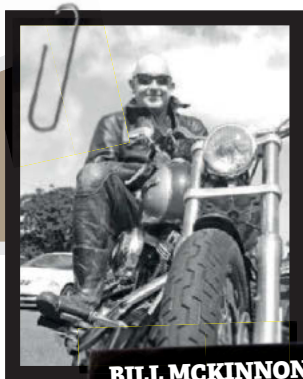


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BILL MCKINNON

I just got back from a trip to the Island Classic race meeting on Phillip Island. Truly, if I never, ever take the Hume Highway to Melbourne ever again it will still be 10 years too soon. It's tolerable, I suppose, on the NSW side of the border because the boys and girls of the Highway Patrol take the eminently sensible attitude that although the official speed limit is 110km/h, a speed of 120km/h is perfectly safe in good weather on Australia's highest-standard road, so they'll leave you alone.

However, you should be aware of a devious new tactic designed to maximise revenue. NSW Highway Patrol cars have a groovy new technicolour paintjob. Look closely, though, and you'll notice that the flash livery is only applied to the sides and the back end. There is no longer any POLICE signage, or the familiar blue chequer motif, anywhere on the front end of a Falcadore chaser. So unless you can pick up the low-profile rack of lights on the roof, if you see one incoming, from either direction, it now looks to all intents and purposes like an unmarked car. These, of course, are much better earners than clearly signed cars.

High-visibility policing makes for better road safety outcomes? Don't make me laugh.

So, where was I? Ah yes, cruising at 120km/h on the Hume. On a Harley Superglide I'm travelling in a state of, shall we say, relaxed

## Avoiding the main roads is always the best way home

concentration. But it doesn't last. By Gundagai I'm bored out of my mind and I soon begin to make the mistake of checking each and every sign to see how many kilometres it is to Melbourne. As you probably know, this is a sure fire way to drive yourself insane and to make time stand still, or possibly even go backwards.

When I hit the Mexican border, where the 110km/h limit is strictly policed and there's the added distraction of covert speed cameras — usually fitted to a Toyota RAV4 or some other

little helper".

If you lob in from interstate and are unfamiliar with how dysfunctional the Victorian driving culture is, you actually feel at risk. Victorian drivers have lost the ability to assess what's happening in front of them and make decisions because the poor bastards are fixated purely on speed and the needle in front of them rather than the traffic and environment around them. So they do impulsive, unpredictable things. Victoria has become a scary place to ride. I felt a lot safer when I punted an XR250, with the

You can wander unrestricted around the pits, perv at the most amazing assortment of machinery in the country, watch the action in the garages, inhale high-octane gasoline and racing two stroke, drink lots of beer and eat deep-fried yellow food all weekend. Does life get any better? I think not.

I'd rather crawl over 1200km of broken glass than face the Hume and Pacific Highways again for the ride home to northern NSW, so I give myself an extra day and take the Olympic Way, overnight in Junee, then head up to Wellington and across to Tamworth for the final leg home via Bendemeer and the Oxley Highway.

What a different and infinitely more pleasurable trip this is. I actually have to move around and ride the bike, as opposed to just sit there in a state of increasingly painful rigor mortis like I do on the Hume. This has a whole bunch of upsides. Although I'm riding slower, time flies because I'm having fun. There are real corners. As in lean it over, even. I get to stop in pretty country towns, at real pubs, cafes and servos rather than those bogan-infested, vomitous McTuckey roadhouse joints. The countryside, green after summer rain, is beautiful, fragrant and ever-changing. It's a privilege to be alive and there is no place I'd rather be than on my motorcycle. Today, I could almost be persuaded that there really is a God.

I'll leave the freeways to the cars in future. Henceforth, the road less travelled is the one I ride. **ARR**

## "I'd rather crawl over 1200km of broken glass than face the Hume and Pacific Highways again for the ride home to northern NSW"



↑ The best riding roads are the ones least travelled

innocuous shitbox parked by the side of the road — I enter a bizarre, almost creepy netherworld of weird driving, where everybody is going at exactly the same speed and there's no such thing as lane etiquette or discipline. My fellow road users are operating in a mindless, zombie-like trance, as though drugged with Mogadon or some other variety of, to quote Mr Jagger, "mother's

Style Queen on the back, around northern Vietnam.

The Island Classic meeting is a superb event; the headline act is an international challenge of four races between teams from Australia, Blighty, Un Zud and the USA. You also get to see every class of historic racing, including the newer stuff up to and including Pre-Moderns and New Era bikes from the early to mid 1990s.



# Grandpa's Axe

All the bits aren't new  
but Honda's VFR800 is  
sharp as ever

STORY: GEOFF SEDDON  
PHOTOS: HEATHER WARE

**Y**ou'd think Honda would get it right after building much the same bike for nearly 30 years, and it has. Everything about the new VFR800F is just right. The engine is a delight, clutch and gearbox action are faultless and the brakes well matched. The steering is neutral and suspension performance impressive. It looks a million bucks in its new clothes and is as comfortable as a well-fitting boot.

So there's much to like about the VFR with little in the way of a catch. The digital speedo is sometimes difficult to read through a tilted visor, as when you have it open at its first stop. The traction control button on the left-side handlebar looks like an afterthought. And that's about it.

It's not the lightest 800 on the market at 242kg ready to

roll, but there's something to be said for momentum under your bum provided the suspension and steering are up to the job, as they are here. The VFR takes the ebbs and flows of secondary highways in its stride. The bike is heavy enough to iron out the bumps without tying itself in knots, and providing plenty of feedback to push a good pace if that's your thing.

I last tested a VFR 25 years ago so have little to say about how this year's model differs from the last apart from I was never a fan of those under-seat mufflers; I always thought they were trying to be something they weren't. The new low-level exhaust is much more in keeping with the bike's character and assists in shaving 10kg off the scales.

Overall the VFR is beautifully presented in a fantastic coat of Honda red. The fairing is substantial but stylish, with a nod to Pierre Terblanche, and adorned only with ►





elegant chrome VFR badges. Ditto the old-school winged Honda badges on the fuel tank; the only sticker is discreet Honda lettering on the end of the seat unit. The high level of finish shouts quality, as does the running gear with its alloy frame, single-sided swingarm and thin-spoked die-cast wheels.

The unobtrusive matt plastic rear guard has luggage attachment points which double as tie-down hooks and while I couldn't lure a pillion, the grab handles look the part. Pillion amenity is further enhanced by an external rear spring preload adjuster to maintain ride height without tools.

Being a Honda, it starts immediately, seemingly without even turning over. It's not the loudest guitar in the band, although that's not necessarily a bad thing: I know my neighbours aren't always enamored of early starts on my own bikes because they've said so a few times. So I am thankful for the peace and quiet as I sneak down the driveway at dawn at the start of a 700km round trip to Walcha via Thunderbolts Way, north-west of Newcastle, NSW.

Also being a Honda, it engages and changes gears with gentle clicks, and the light clutch is so good it almost swaps cogs by itself. My first 100km is on the M1 to Newcastle, a good opportunity to work out the switchgear and find a comfy perch. First I try the five-level heated handgrips, accessed by a button next to the left-side handgrip. Then I have a look around the digital dash to find all the other useful stuff — clock, tripmeter, fuel gauge — together with a gear indicator that says I've been in fifth for the past 40km. D'oh! I knock it up into sixth and the only other thing that changes is the needle on the analogue tachometer, so smooth is the V4 whispering along underneath.

North of Newcastle, I head off towards Gloucester along the Buckets Way: 80km of potholes and roadworks but a welcome respite from the motorway. The VFR has a long sculpted seat which offers up a number of different options, although I'll-ol'-173cm-me opts to sit forward most of the time for a classic sports-touring riding position. Amazingly, I don't get a sore bum — well, not until the end — and that includes one 250km section on the







## TWO VALVES OR FOUR?

Honda introduced VTEC technology to the VFR in 2002, whereby only two valves per cylinder operated at lower rpm, transitioning to four valves when push came to shove. It was flawed in that low-end grunt didn't seem much different and the top-end came on suddenly.

The system has been retained on the new F model, but superior engine management has the transition much more gradual when it chimes in at 7000rpm and is mostly noticeable to the ear. The result is a deliciously smooth and rider-friendly engine that builds power seamlessly to a relatively modest but always engaging 78kW at 10,250rpm, without much regard for how many valves are bouncing around at any one time.



↑ Single-sided swingarm harks back to the RC30



↑ Rubber-topped pegs quell the vibes and hero knobs take a big hero to get them on the ground



## “The new low-level exhaust is much more in keeping with the bike's character”

way home without a stop.

I fill up in Gloucester, not having checked fuel capacity before I left and not yet trusting the gauge. It takes nine litres for 5.5L/100km. The walllopers have been active in these parts, so I take it easy until the turn-off for Thunderbolts Way. I give it a big handful in second to launch me on my path and the traction control dulls the engine over the worst of the potholes. You can turn it off via a prominent left-side control but I can't for the life of me see why anyone ever would. The bike comes standard with ABS which I don't trouble on this trip. I'm flying solo on a

little travelled road so today's not the time or the place to test my limits.

For the first time I wind it through the gears, changing up between nine and 10,000rpm. The power is linear without the peakiness of a sports bike, which would cost you on a ride day, but it makes for a relaxing bike to ride fast. It reminded me of my 900SS, although the VFR is much more powerful. From 7000rpm on it starts to sound like a sports bike, mostly I suspect from the induction side of things. I remember the first VFR750 engine as feeling and sounding more like a pair of V-twins than a four. The latest model is more refined, but that feeling is still there whether imagined or not. A very slight vibration intrudes from 6500rpm on, but is most noticeable when I go looking for it by dropping back gears to raise the revs at touring speeds. In top ▶





or on the pace, it isn't an issue as there is too much else happening to notice.

The Honda copes with all manner of road surfaces and weather conditions over the next 175km to Walcha. Suspension is adjustable for spring preload and rebound damping but I leave them at their standard settings as confirmed by the owner's manual. I am blessed with a dry run throughout the early championship sections and quickly find a good groove on the excellent Dunlop D222 Sportsmax tyres. The bike is very stable but steers with a light touch and holds its line with the best of them. The steering is sensitive to the throttle, in a good way. Run a bit wide and backing

off the throttle will tighten it up. See the exit and pour it back on to lift it up. Nothing scrapes, not even the hero knobs on the footpegs, although I do get the boot down on the smoother stuff to remind me I'm going fast enough.

As we climb the Great Dividing Range, the weather closes in, drizzle at first and then showers, just in time for a lengthy section of roadworks. The dirt surface is as slippery as a politician but a light touch sees us through. By now I know the Honda well; from the first kilometre it has been very easy to ride, always going where it's pointed and offering up no surprises — exactly what you want on a distant mountain road on a wet day.



↑ Just like a piece of op-art



↑ Right switch is less cluttered

## QUICKSPECS

**Model:** Honda VFR800F

**Price:** \$14,599 plus orc

**Warranty:** Two years, unlimited km

**Engine:** Liquid-cooled fuel-injected 90-degree V-four with four valves per cylinder & DOHC

**Bore & stroke:** 72.0 x 48.0mm

**Displacement:** 782cc

**Compression ratio:** 11.8:1

**Power:** 78kW @ 10,250rpm

**Torque:** 75Nm @ 8500rpm

**Transmission:** Six-speed, chain drive

**Frame:** Box-section twin-spar alloy

**Dimensions:** Wet weight 242kg; wheelbase 1460mm; rake 25.4 degrees; trail 95mm; fuel capacity 21.2L

**Suspension:** Conventional 43mm fork adjustable for preload and rebound damping, 108mm travel; single-sided monoshock rear adjustable for preload and rebound damping 120mm travel

**Brakes:** 2 x 310mm rotors with four-piston calipers front; 256mm disc with single sliding-piston caliper rear

**Tyres:** Dunlop Sportsmax D222; 120/70ZR17 front, 180/55ZR17 rear

**Verdict:** A great sports tourer that is hard to fault





↑ That's a thumbful of big buttons!



↑ The sound of silence, when the bike isn't running anyway



↑ Basic but brilliant front-end set-up

The road finally opens up and I wind it through the gears once more, as much to hear the engine as enjoy the power. In a nano-second, we are at 180km/h. The VFR is as stable as they come; you feel the bumps through the bars, pegs and seat but it's rock solid, even on a damp surface. The engine feels and sounds great. The riding position, so comfy at 120km/h, is equally suited to high speeds; the lean forward is just right and the fairing cuts a big wedge to hide behind as I blast through the crisp high-country air.

Alas, the fairing is not quite so good at keeping the rain at bay that sets in on the last stretch into Walcha, so heavy that I drop my speed to under 100km/h. My plan is to have a lengthy brunch at the bike-friendly Royal Cafe but it's teeming and I can't see the point in drying out only to get soaked again. Getting off the

bike to fuel up reminds me how wet I already am and has me ruing my decision not to pack more serious rain gear. But having said that, the fairing offers a trillion times more weather protection than some other bikes and I am grateful for what I have.

The rain hangs around for 50km on the way home, then suddenly the sky turns blue and I allow the Honda another high-speed run to clear its throat and dry my clothes. This really is some bike; having stoically got me through all the difficult stuff, it now wants to party again. The engine makes good power from 6000rpm and offers useful engine braking which you can dial in according to gear and rpm. It doesn't punch out of corners so much as push, and on the few occasions they are called for, the non-linked brakes are progressive and ►











↑ Big and easy to read so long as your visor isn't halfway up

## “Despite the earlier rain, after 400km I feel fresh and keen for more”

powerful without the overkill of some sports bikes in similar conditions.

I pull into Nowendoc for an early lunch, with a little over 400km under my belt. Despite the earlier rain, which tends to tense me up, I feel relatively fresh and keen for more, with the best part of the road to come. But I am 60, so I knock it back a tenth and the ride is all the more enjoyable for it. The Honda never puts a foot wrong and I lose myself in the moment, not really thinking about what I'm doing, just doing it, like a surfer on a wave. All too soon, we have dropped down to the coast and the VFR resumes touring mode for the final haul home.

I still don't know what the fuel capacity is — I suspect a lot — but I

have faith in the fuel gauge so stay on the bike to test its range and comfort. The reserve light comes on at an impressive 300km, and 30km later it takes 19.1 litres for 5.8L/100km. I later discover the capacity is 21 litres so we don't have much to spare.

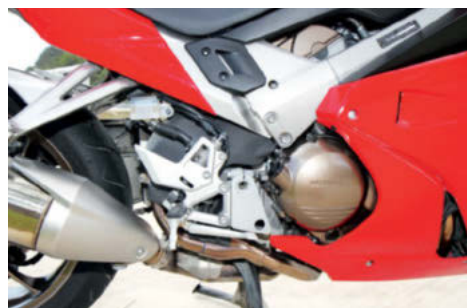
Heading south on the freeway, I find it easier to dial in a constant cop-friendly pace than on the way north. The muffler is louder to my ears and I am more in tune with the engine, although I still use the big tach to check my speed.

I go looking for the mysterious disappearing numerical speedo. In fact, the whole digital section of the dash seems to bundy on and off at will. I soon discover that just a slight change in head position fixes it. I am wearing sunglasses under a clear Bell visor and as far as I can work out the angle of the visor relative to the dash seems to cause some weird light refraction. Once sorted, it's easy to compensate.

By mid-afternoon I am home with

just shy of 700km on the tripmeter. I allow myself an early beer while I give it a scrub ahead of tomorrow's photo session. The Honda is covered in muck but I have it looking a million bucks in under half an hour and am thankful for the well-weighted centrestand when cleaning the wheels.

Some bikes scream character. Others just go about their business without fuss as they take you to places far and wide, and their character comes from the memories they generate. At a time when large-capacity adventure bikes are all the rage, the VFR800 is proof positive that a classic sports-tourer is always a viable alternative, especially on the tar. **ARR**



↑ That keyhole opens the seat in case you are wondering. Grab rails are very good







# LAM

# Roast

**Style, flair, performance and practicality. Triumph's learner-legal Street Triple is a whole lot of motorcycle to start out on**

STORY: MICK MATHESON  
PHOTOS: ANNE BAKER, MM

**W**elcome to the top of the LAMS castle. Here there are really only two bikes that argue about who's the king of the learner bikes: Ducati's Monster 659 and this one, Triumph's Street Triple 660. Oh yes, there are others nudging the 660cc limit and tripping on the edge of the 150kW/tonne mark, but for class, quality, cache and cost, these two take the cake. Buy one and the world knows you're serious, not just about riding but about the style in which you do it, because you paid full whack to get something pretty special.

Or did you? We won't try to answer that question about the faithful and much-loved Monster right now, but instead we'll look at the Triumph, an ever so slightly smaller version of the lovely Street Triple 675. Like the Ducati and Yamaha MT-07, the Triumph engine has been downsized specifically for the Aussie and Kiwi LAMS laws in an effort to win part of the massive learner market. Not only was the 675 just 15cc over the limit, it was too powerful anyway. But by shortening the stroke a fraction and de-tuning the engine, Triumph has created a red-blooded, full-sized and thrilling motorcycle for L- and P-plate riders who couldn't care less that the old 250s are now 300s. ►





I mean, no disrespect to those who do prefer smaller bikes, and none whatsoever to learners who know a 300, for example, is the best bike for them to start out on, but the Street Triple is a real bike. It is the kind of bike the majority of us aspire to and if you're willing and able to go straight to the top, why not?

Triumph's three-cylinder engines are one of engineering's gifts to motorcycling. They sound superb, with a silky rasp that's so good when you're on the gas. They're smooth in power delivery as well as feel, though the handlebars do transmit some tingling vibrations to your hands. They are tight and responsive and give the impression of both strength and lightness.

The Street Triple pushes the learner-

## Triumph's three-cylinder engines are one of engineering's gifts to motorcycling. They sound superb

legal power-to-weight ratio to the limit, despite having just more than half the output of the 78kW 675. We're told it's a fraction of a kilowatt shy of the 150kW/tonne limit when calculated the official way. Triumph has tuned it for midrange performance. Power comes on from just above idle speed and surges past 4000rpm through a chunk of torque-laden grunt that keeps it going until somewhere past 8000rpm. There's not much more in the last third of the rev range to the 12,500rpm redline, even though the power peaks at 9300rpm, and the natural inclination is to click the next

gear before you get far into the top end. Stay in that 4000-8000rpm midrange and you'll have fun the whole time.

The big Triumph's weight does diminish the power's strength, but this bike's still quicker by far than the popular 300cc bikes, even though the 300s are that much lighter. Along with the other 650-class LAMS bikes, the Trumpy has heaps of power for a novice rider but not too much. There are no surprises in the way the power comes on, and there's not so much that there's any great risk of an inexperienced wrist launching the whole plot into the bushes. The lack of



↑ Bug-eyed headlight is synonymous with Triumph nakedbikes



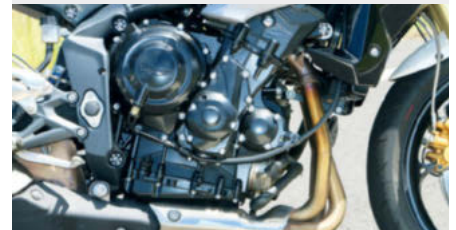




↑ Shorty pipe looks like an aftermarket job



↑ Braking package is excellent



↑ Externally, the 660 engine doesn't look any different from the Street Triple

top-end punch sees to that, while the fat midrange provides practical, rewarding and enjoyable riding.

It makes the Street Triple a very good bike for open-road riding, and I'd happily tour anywhere on it. It cruises along in top gear, where there's enough acceleration to overtake slower traffic if there's a few hundred metres of clear road ahead, and I was never forced to change down a gear to maintain the speed limit up steep hills. A couple of taps down through the light and precise

gearbox brings exhilarating acceleration when it's needed.

I can see a lot of riders sticking with the 660 once their licences allow them to move up to more power. If you're not hungry for extra kilowatts, the Triumph will keep you satisfied. This could be a great choice for experienced riders who didn't feel the urge for the full power of a 675, because it's well and truly fast enough in town and on the highway if you tend to cruise along not much faster than speed limits and take a relaxed ►











**“The big Triumph’s weight does diminish the power’s strength, but this bike’s still quicker by far than the popular 300cc bikes, even though the 300s are that much lighter”**

view of things. The bigger engine coasts along so much more comfortably than the smaller ones. However, the 660 is only \$500 cheaper than the full-blown 675 version so there’s no real incentive to be so modest.

The 660 can be a miser on fuel compared with full-power big bikes. Riding around in the 80, 90 and 100 zones on the edge of the burbs and beyond, it used a bit more than 4L/100km. At that rate it won’t cost much to run and the touring range from the small tank will be going on for 400km, maybe more if you’re pottering along. I rarely saw it rise above 5L/100km, so the range will never be less than 300km. The seat might start to get to you well before you’ve gone that far, because it’s fairly firm and its shape tends to lock you into one place. However, the riding position is excellent for all-round riding. It’s neutral enough for long distances, sporty enough to keep you in command, and roomy enough for most people. The 800mm seat height seems

lower because the seat is narrow, and the majority of learner riders won’t struggle with it.

Fuelled up and ready to ride, the 660 weighs close to 200kg, which seems hefty in the learner-bike market but isn’t really a weight many people should be concerned about. Unless you’re very small, you quickly learn to handle this much mass. The positive side to it is that the Street Triple seems more secure on the road. That’s enhanced by neutral steering geometry that imparts great front-end stability along with suspension that’s quite well controlled, if rather firm at the rear. There’s no suspension adjustment other than rear spring preload, but over a range of road conditions at typical road speeds the factory setup copes well. I developed confidence in it over bumpy surfaces once I realised the harsh reactions at the rear didn’t translate to the rear wheel hopping or the front end being upset; the Triumph tracked well. ►

## TRIUMPH’S STILLBORN LAM

Triumph Australia was looking forward to the 250cc single the factory announced a couple of years ago, and they’re just as disappointed that it’s been kyboshed. It would have been an excellent partner for the mighty Street Triple 660 in the line-up for local learners, offering a lighter, less-intimidating and more affordable entry-level ride.

But it isn’t going to happen. After going a long way down the track of development and testing, Triumph pulled the pin on the bike, which was to have been built as a sports bike and a naked bike in the company’s new Indian factory. The 250 was aimed primarily at Asia’s “emerging markets”, but it was almost certain a small portion of the production run would have been diverted to the eager Aussie market.

Paul Stroud, Triumph sales and marketing director, said the project was “on hold for strategic reasons”. In other words, at the last minute the bean counters realised it wasn’t viable. Why, we’re not sure, but there’s almost no likelihood the project will ever be resurrected.





↑ Attention to detail with styling is flawless



↑ Seat is comfortable and right for a pillion when your licence allows it



↑ Multifunction dash looks basic, but does the job



Its steering is fun. The stability doesn't slow the Street Triple's response to your steering inputs, and while the bike's no GP-inspired darter, it tips quickly and predictably into corners, tipping in with consistency until you're deep into a lean angle, clipping the apex you aimed for and rolling on the power as you head out onto the next straight. Like a good LAMS bike should, it doesn't worry if you need to adjust your line a bit and it is quite forgiving.

The one hassle for new players (and even old ones like me!) is the limited steering lock. It's easy to turn the handlebars to the lock stops when you're

manoeuvring in traffic and if you're not ready for it, it can throw you off your balance. The Street Triple has a wider turning circle than is ideal.

These aren't the strongest brakes in the world but they have all the stopping power the bike needs without being grabby. The pair of front discs only have twin-piston calipers but they're enough to activate the ABS if you jump on them in panic; ditto the single-piston caliper at the rear. The feedback you get is good and to my mind they're about spot-on for a new rider who's mastering the art of effective braking. The chassis copes well

with these brakes, too, not pitching or trying to stand up the bike if you throw out the anchors mid-corner.

All up it's an extremely well-behaved bike with a healthy dose of sporty control. You may not adapt to it as quickly as you would a smaller, lighter bike but it's friendly and manageable all the same.

Besides, it looks so damn cool, especially if you dress it up a little with accessories like the fly screen. Besides the Ducati Monster, the naked Triumphs have been style masters since the Speed Triple got dual headlights. The current

**“All up it’s an extremely well-behaved bike with a healthy dose of sporty control. You may not adapt to it as quickly as you would a smaller, lighter bike but it’s friendly and manageable all the same”**

Street Triples are sexy and aggro, with a squat, compact and half-clean, half-cobbly design. They look powerful, not learner-legal, with a slightly intimidating stance.

Yet for all that, there’s nothing overly intimidating or difficult about the 660. Apart from its benign power delivery and dependable handling, it has light controls with adjustable brake lever, a sweet clutch action, quick and light gear shifting, and a generous view from the mirrors. The

little dash board has a large dial for the rev counter and an LCD panel on the left showing speed, time, gear position, engine temperature and a couple of trip settings that scroll through things like consumption, range, etc. There’s also a lap timer function for those doing track days.

It’s among the most expensive LAMS bikes you can buy at \$12,490 plus on-road costs, but that hasn’t held back the big Triumph triple, which has sold well. It’s unique thanks to the lovely three-cylinder engine, and it’s such a treat that Triumph created this sub-660cc version for LAMS. There’s a ton of grunt for first-time riders, to the level where this is an eminently practical bike on the open road. And it’s fun. The power and weight might be more than some learners want but it’s everything that others crave. The Street Triple 660 is the real deal for confident new riders and it has few peers that can match its style, substance or integrity. **ARR**



## QUICKSPECS

**Model:** Triumph Street Triple 660

**Price:** \$12,490 (plus on-road charges)

**Colours:** Diablo Red, Crystal White, Phantom Black

**Warranty:** Two years, unlimited distance

**Servicing intervals:** 10,000km

**Engine:** Liquid-cooled, DOHC, 12 valve, inline triple

**Bore x stroke:** 74 x 51.1mm

**Displacement:** 660cc

**Power:** 41kW @ 9300rpm

**Torque:** 55Nm @ 5155rpm

**Transmission:** Wet clutch, 6-speed gearbox, chain final drive

**Frame:** Aluminium twin-spar

**Dimensions:** Seat height 800mm, weight 181kg (dry), fuel capacity 17.4L, wheelbase 1410mm, rake 24.1°, trail 100mm

**Suspension:** Front, 41mm fork, 110mm travel. Rear, monoshock with preload adjustment, 125mm travel

**Brakes:** Front, 2 x 310mm discs, 2-piston calipers. Rear, 220mm disc, 1-piston caliper. ABS

**Tyres:** Front, 120/70ZR17. Rear, 180/55ZR17

**Fuel consumption:** 4.6L/100km (average on test)

**Theoretical range:** 380km

**Verdict:** Sexy, powerful, solid option at the top of the LAMS list





# Travelling Man

**If you'd spent the best part of your life travelling the world, you'd also have some pretty amazing stories and a lot of experience to share**

Sam Manicom has travelled for much of his life. His first solo trip was when he was 16 years old and since then he's hitchhiked, travelled by bus, train, bicycle and sail. On his longest journey he set off as a novice motorcyclist, aiming to ride a motorcycle the length of Africa. This planned one-year journey turned into eight years and 320,000km around the world.

Sam describes himself as a traveller first, a motorcyclist and then an author. He's written four books about his journey and tells us that his aim is to share the fun of the road, and to encourage others to go out and live their dreams of adventure. We wanted to know more. ►









**“Everyone said, ‘Don’t go to Colombia.’ I’m glad I did. It’s one of the most spectacular countries I’ve ever been to”**

**ARR:** Bearing in mind that you’ve travelled in so many different ways, what is it that excites you about motorcycle travel so much?

**SM:** Without doubt it’s the freedom a bike gives me. I can wake up to each day and think, what shall I do today? Not, what does my bus or train ticket tell me I have to. The freedom to explore is quite magnificent. Africa, for example, is just 9600km long. I rode 35,000km because there was so much to see, and I could. I spent just over two years riding across Asia and every day really was an adventure. I love the fact that my bike allows me to stop just about anywhere

I like. That’s a huge bonus in some parts of South America, for example. There are some spectacular views that I can stop to look at, but a car wouldn’t find space to park and a bus would belt on past.

I also like the fact that I don’t have to carry a rucksack! Riding into a headwind is relatively effortless and being out in the open means you are really accessible. That’s the first step to meeting people. You know, I also like the fact that I don’t have a roof over my head. My bike, by the way, is called Libby. That’s short for Liberty — it’s what she gives me.

**ARR:** You are a bit of a disaster magnet aren’t you? You fell critically ill in Thailand and am I right in thinking that you were saved by a prostitute?

**SM:** One of the risks of making a long journey is that things will go wrong. It doesn’t matter how you travel, stuff

happens, but for me it’s how you handle those times that’s so important. We all travel to have adventures, to learn and to find out more about ourselves, don’t we? Something going wrong is a combination of all of those, and inevitably there’s a quirky or funny side to things.

One of my favourite travelling mantras is “expect the unexpected”. It’s not that I go looking for disasters — rather, they kind of find me. I certainly didn’t expect to have my life saved by a prostitute! What happened? I’d stopped for a while to enjoy exploring one of Thailand’s islands. The road was treating me really well and I was having fun riding away from the beaten track. This time my temporary home was a small bamboo cabin right on the edge of a white sand beach. The sea was turquoise and the palm trees rustled their unique sound every time the breeze joined us. Life was pretty darned good. Then I fell ill. Within two days I was so weak that I couldn’t get out of bed and was so dehydrated that I was hardly sweating.

A very pretty Thai girl was living in the cabin next to mine. She was a fun girl to meet but she surprised me by her lack of knowledge. She was from a





■ A river crossing, Zimbabwe

poor mountain family and had recently become a prostitute; she worked so she could earn the fees to continue her schooling. Though she'd heard of AIDS, she hardly knew a thing about it and wasn't being as careful as she should have been. We'd sat on her verandah talking about life in Thailand, her ambitions and how to protect herself from all the STDs she was vulnerable to. I think that she enjoyed the conversations — in part because I didn't want to take her to bed.

We became friends and it was Kulap who noticed my bike outside my cabin, but no sign of me. She knocked on my door and called out but I was too weak to answer. She came into my cabin and saw the semi-conscious state I was in. Unbeknown to me I had a bad bout of Dengue fever. She knew exactly what it was and over the next week Kulap

nursed me back to health. When I had the strength to make it to a doctor, he told me that she'd saved my life.

**ARR:** You've been arrested in several countries haven't you, but what happened in Chennai in India?

**SM:** One of the things I love about travelling by motorcycle is that not only is it an amazing icebreaker between strangers, but I find myself in all sorts of situations that other travellers are unlikely to experience — often in ports. They are a world of their own, with all the traditions, rules and regulations that customs offices and warehouses inevitably have. But the port of Chennai in India wasn't fun. I simply couldn't get the bureaucracy into gear and I wasn't even allowed inside the port gates. From outside of the port I could even see the

container my bike was in, but could I get at it? No. Scores of forms were filled in, rubber stamped and dispatched via runners. They all seemed to get lost in humid offices where the only thing that moved the papers was the lazy swish of overhead fans. It felt like red tape gone mad. The weeks were ticking by. I had an appointment to keep in Kathmandu and I was getting to the stage where I was risking not making it.

Then, one day the shipping agent I'd been working with had a brain wave. We were at week number five of the tortoise-speed chase. "I'll give you a document that says you are part-time on the agency staff. We'll use that to get in the port and then we will try to see the port managing director." All went well and inside the port we had a stroke of luck. Yes, the MD would see us. I explained the situation. To my surprise he apologised, rubber



↑ Pedestrians in India



↑ Washing up in Lake Malawi





■ Making it to Colombia



**“There’s no doubt that in some countries size is what matters. But that’s simple to deal with. If it’s bigger than you and it wants to go first? Let it. Why not? You soon lose any element of machismo and rules of the road are things you learn each time you go into a new country”**

stamped my documents and gave them to me with words to the effect of, that’s you sorted then. If the gravity of the port had allowed it I would have done a few leaps of joy, but I wasn’t counting my chickens. I’d learned enough about India not to do that! Moments later the guard on the exit point arrested the shipping agent, and then me. “These documents are forgeries,” he stated, looking at my temporary agent papers, pointing his gun at me as he did so. The next hours were very long ...

**ARR:** On a big ride everyone is going to make mistakes. Which one of yours leaps into mind?

**SM:** One of the most stupid things I’ve ever tried to do is to ride through northern Turkey in the middle of winter. It wasn’t the plan; I’d been delayed in Delhi. It’d taken me three months to get a visa to travel through Iran. I’d been determined that I wouldn’t miss the chance to explore some of this beautiful and unique country, but the delay meant I was in the right place at the wrong time. The mountains of Turkey should have been beautiful, but with inches of black ice on the roads and metres of snow on the roadsides, they didn’t look that way

to me at all. Every section of road was a battle to stay upright — to survive even. The warning tingle that frostbite was an issue buzzed in my finger tips and I battled to stay warm. Snow fell ever stronger and my breath froze on the inside of my visor. I rode, with my bike shimmying unpredictably on the ice, one finger inside my visor to clear away my breath-ice, and another on the outside to clear away the snow. Let’s put it this way, lesson learned.

**ARR:** Have you ever feared for your life?

**SM:** Yes. The first time was during the initial weeks of the eight-year trip around the world. I’d only been riding a bike for a couple of months when I left the British Isles. I spent the time riding across Europe feeling like I was some sort of motorcycling accessory hanging onto the back of the bike. I really wasn’t in control and I was afraid. But I was determined I was going to learn and to make it to my target. Cape Town seemed a very long way away.

Actually, other than that I’ve very rarely feared for my life. Perhaps I have a strong streak of stupidity or maybe it’s more a case of when something is putting your life at risk, you are too busy

dealing with the situation to be afraid. I’ve been shot at a couple of times, had a 17-bone fracture accident in the Namib Desert, and my bike caught fire while I was riding it. There were a fair few other mishaps but mostly it was my own imagination that made me fearful.

The worst time was being jailed in Tanzania. I had an accident and was charged with speeding, driving without due care and attention, and attempting to commit grievous bodily harm. I’d been travelling very slowly on the busy road into a small town, my senses were firing on all cylinders and I definitely didn’t ride on purpose at the man who stepped out in front of me. Being thrown into a jail cell with 20 men was the scariest moment of my life. And when I realised that rape was on one of the guy’s minds ... thankfully fate didn’t let the situation head any further in that direction.

**ARR:** Who’s the most interesting person you’ve met on your travels?

**SM:** Now that I can’t answer, sorry. The world is full of fascinating people. In fact, I’d be happy to lay money on the belief that at least 95 per cent of the world’s population is basically made up of good people, and they are all interesting in their own way. Each has a tale to tell and each gives us the opportunity to learn. The mainstream media only concentrates on scandal and drama so we hardly ever hear about the good people.

Perhaps I should tell the tale of the orphan children in Tanzania, who set up their own business so they didn’t have ►

■ A back road in Mexico







to beg. Or the raggedy woman in the deserts of northern Kenya who insisted on sharing her food with me. Then there was the blond Aboriginal man in the outback. We sat under the stars and he told me about his family's history and their lives today.

One of the most amazing things about long-distance travel is the constant chance to meet new people. There are millions of interesting people out there and many of them are other travellers! Candidates would be Australian David Woodburn, his wife Emmy and their seven-year-old daughter Matea. This family had been travelling the world in their motorcycle sidecar rig for years. Matea had been born on the road, spoke a series of languages fluently and was as much at home playing with the local kids as she was holding a

conversation with adults.

**ARR:** What drives you to put yourself in potentially dangerous situations?

**SM:** Well, I do get carried away with my curiosity from time to time and maybe I have a different perception of what danger is. It can be a buzz where every sense in your body is working on full power. Things taste sweeter, smell richer and it's at times where risk is involved that you find out who you are. Ethiopia and Southern Sudan weren't safe places to be when I rode through with an English couple I'd met, but to get further south we had to travel through them. I was also fascinated about how decades of war would have changed the countries and the people. Would hunger and suspicion have taken over?

Everyone said, "Don't go to Colombia." I'm glad I did. It's one of the most spectacular countries I've ever been to. On occasion I've been warned off riding particular routes — "Too Dangerous!" This is where both common sense and research come into play. Many times I've been told things like, "The villagers in the next place are all robbers; they will kill you." When I've ridden that route, I've found that the villagers were amazed that I'd survived the place I'd just come from. I do have a healthy survival instinct but perhaps it's that I've been lucky enough to learn that most fears are not based in reality. Treat people and situations with due respect and though things can go wrong, chances are you won't die. The chances are far greater that you'll have had a fascinating time. ►



↑ Camping on the beach in Baja, Mexico



↑ Looking down over Fish River, Africa



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**ARR:** Do you think travelling by bike makes your journey more dangerous?

**SM:** No, not at all, unless perhaps I choose to make it so. I don't have to rely on dodgy bus drivers to control my destiny. Some trains around the world look as if they would be happier on a scrap heap and if I can see a potentially difficult situation going on in front of me, I can change my route. A bus has a schedule and a route it has to work to. There's no doubt that in some countries size is what matters. But that's simple to deal with. If it's bigger than you and it wants to go first? Let it. Why not? You soon lose any element of machismo and rules of the road are things you learn each time you go into a new country. Looking back on India, I was literally run off the road 12 times in just one day. There the buses and trucks are dictators, and I don't think I'd look good as a bonnet ornament on a TATA truck! There is one other thing. People don't feel threatened by you when you are out in the open. Perversely, your vulnerability to the world makes you less of a target.

**ARR:** What do you learn from your "living on the edge" experiences?

**SM:** Take your time and keep calm. Think positively and positive things are

most likely to happen. Don't be afraid of people, but show them respect and even in the worst situations you are most likely to get respect in return. Trust your instincts. If something looks dodgy and has the feeling that it's not right, then that's the way it probably is. Never be afraid to turn around; there's always another adventure waiting to happen. Know that every time something goes wrong, it's the start of a new and unexpected adventure. They are often the most fun!

**ARR:** Is there anything you regret?

**SM:** Yes, that I had to stop the eight-year ride.

**ARR:** What advice would you give people looking for an adventure?

**SM:** Can I give you random thoughts as they pop into my mind? Here goes:

- Don't be afraid of the unknown; revel in the fact that there is so much to learn and to become involved with.
- Do your homework so you can take advantage of as many aspects of your journey as there are available. Don't over-plan but enjoy the learning curve. For me a good third of an adventure comes from this stage.
- Don't overload yourself with kit that "may" be useful. If you don't have something you need, either buy it along the way or get it sent out to you. Both are amazingly easy to do. Battling with too much stuff can turn an adventure into a chore.
- Learn about the cultures and customs of other lands so you understand more about where you are travelling and you don't risk offending others through your ignorance.
- Enjoy meeting people — don't be afraid of making a fool of yourself. Buying a chicken dinner in a land where you know little of the language can be great fun and can make you friends.
- Do learn how to say the basics in the new languages you come across. Hello, please, thank you, which is the way to? ►
- Work out what you really want from your adventures. Is your priority to visit museums, to lay on white sand beaches, to climb every mountain, to ...
- If you are planning to travel with someone else, make sure that you know what their aims are and that you make sure they understand yours.

■ Snow time in the USA





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## SAM MANICOM

These things will stand you in great stead. As will learning how to say “Don’t be silly, I’m not paying that much!”

- While you are travelling, pay a lot of attention to local knowledge — all sorts of opportunities can open up as a result and you can steer clear of dodgy situations too.
- Pay good attention to weather patterns, visa conditions and the health situation — what inoculations should you have and how long do they take to organise.
- Make sure you have a top-rate travel insurance policy — preferably one that includes repatriation in case something goes badly wrong.
- Work out how much you think your budget should be and then add half again.



■ Another bike on the trails! Namibia

■ Exploring logging tracks on Vancouver Island, Canada



- Write a will before you go and make sure your family know exactly what you want to happen. You can save everyone a lot of grief by doing so.
- Write a journal. You’ll be on intake overload. It’s so easy to forget the things that happen.
- Don’t get bogged down with blogs and websites. Go out and live your dream. Become a stranger in strange lands. That’s so much harder to do when you are under pressure to find Wi-Fi and to make regular reports home. Cut that umbilical cord!
- Travel slowly. You could be on an adventure of a lifetime. Go too fast and you’ll belt on past the good stuff!
- And finally, really, don’t get bogged down with the prep and don’t let fear get in the way. Let your fear become a trip enhancer! **ARR**

Sam’s books — *Into Africa*, *Under Asian Skies*, *Distant Suns* and *Tortillas to Totems* are available as paperbacks and in e-book format. *Into Africa* and *Under Asian Skies* are now available as audio books. The paperbacks are available with free worldwide delivery from The Book Depository. If you’d like a signed copy, order direct from Sam via his website [www.sam-manicom.com](http://www.sam-manicom.com)



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# Big Ride





# Out

**Three blokes, a beer truck and an outback destination — what a ride!**

**STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY:** PHILIP LALOR

**I**n June last year, after a few email exchanges, four mates — three on bikes and one in a beer truck — decided to meet at Bourke, the gateway to the real outback, and ride and drive to Longreach. The four of us spent the four months between deciding to embark on the Outback Odyssey and the date of departure engrossed in various online forums, adventure bike reviews and magazine articles. There's an incredible amount of information available! The friendly banter between us increased as the date of departure approached. Then, two days before it was time to meet in Bourke, silence fell as nerves and the reality of the trip set in.

The interesting challenge for one of the riders was that he didn't have a bike! After some internet searching and inquiries, he rented a BMW F800GS from Bikescape in Sydney. This presented a few other challenges — the Renter lived in Maclean on the NSW North Coast.

The beer truck departed from Lismore to meet up with the BMW R1200GS in Tamworth before the pair headed to Bourke. The renter was picking up the near-new F800GS from the inner-Sydney suburb of Annandale, and the Triumph Tiger 800XC had agreed to meet the renter in Sydney. A gleaming blue F800GS was waiting at Bikescape — near new was a pretty spot-on description, with only 1300km showing on the odo. The crew at Bikescape were helpful and ensured the pick-up process went smoothly. After a rundown on the bike and the all-important signatures and credit cards were obtained, it was time to head west. ►







Annandale is not far from the centre of Sydney and the traffic on Parramatta Road certainly reflected the hustle and bustle of a major metropolitan centre. The renter darted through numerous back roads and local streets to familiarise himself with his bike, then re-joined Parramatta Road near Lewisham. A quick thumbs up from the renter and into the traffic we went.

We chose Bells Line of Road for our trip over the mountains and as we climbed out of Richmond we appreciated

## **“The addictive sound of the exhausts filled the air and we each wore a grin as wide and as expansive as the outback”**

the change in temperature and traffic density. The renter had initially dismissed the BMW's heated hand grips, thinking, “I won't need them, don't worry about it.” On the Bells Line the temperature dropped to around 12 degrees and, sure enough, the heated grips were in for a workout. Light drizzle and rain, mixed with patches of fog, gave way to overcast

skies and warmer temperatures as we made our way to the western side of the sandstone curtain.

As we left Lithgow, a slight left-hand deviation followed by a gentle right-hand sweeping bend took us on to the Castlereagh Highway — a road that has improved considerably over the years, yet still manages to generate many smiles. The run into Mudgee was smooth and flowing, the Tiger and the F800GS revelling in the twists, turns and undulations. The temperature was comfortable and the renter and the F800Gs appeared to be finding their groove. During the afternoon we heard from the beer truck and the R1200Gs in Burren Junction. They were also enjoying the local licensed premises. For us, Mudgee's Oriental Hotel was a great spot to spend the night — cold beers and a great meal with a comfortable room.

On Tuesday the renter and the Tiger needed to make Dubbo for breakfast, and then push for Bourke. After an enjoyable and entertaining ride from Mudgee to Dubbo via Wellington, the roads became straighter, flatter, longer



■ A roadside break on a patch of dirt. The tarmac got too much!



■ Dawn breaks and the steeds are ready to ride



and hotter! Definitely no need for heated hand grips. The road between Narromine and Nyngan is punctuated by a few bends before and after Trangie. Other than that it's pretty straight and pretty flat. At Nyngan both bikes needed a drink of premium — with the Tiger taking about one litre more than the F800GS, something that was reflected throughout the trip. From Nyngan to Bourke the roads are flat and straight, with the landscape dominated by a vastness and at times emptiness. On this

stretch, the classic red dirt so symbolic of the outback appeared and the other constant for the trip — roadkill — became more prevalent.

No trip to Bourke from Nyngan is complete without a stop at the Mulga Creek Hotel in Byrock. By this time the temperature had climbed and the renter was certainly feeling the heat. A cold, refreshing, non-alcoholic beverage helped him keep his cool. The Mulga Creek Hotel proudly displays the stoicism and community spirit of outback and

rural villages. A memorial to fallen local soldiers stands poignantly at the entrance to the car park, commemorating the past, while parking meters at the front of the pub collect money for the Royal Flying Doctor Service — a vital link to the ongoing survival and future of people in the outback.

We were spurred on to Bourke with photos from the beer truck and the R1200GS showing swimming pools and cold beers, and promises of cabins with air-conditioning. The road from Byrock to Bourke livened up a little with a few bends before town, passing the shell of the former abattoir, a concrete and steel headstone to a time in the past. Accommodation had been arranged at Kidman's Camp in North Bourke, on the banks of the Darling River. Kidman's Camp has a range of accommodation available and the location is well suited to bikes. There are two excellent swimming pools, a well-equipped camp kitchen and a central amenities block. The park was full and everyone had a smile on their face.

We unpacked the Tiger and F800GS then started on the tall stories and friendly banter about which bike was better. The comparisons and stories got bigger and better with every beer. ►

■ Hay?







## **“The run into Mudgee was smooth and flowing, the Tiger and the F800GS revelling in the twists, turns and undulations”**

— this is country Australia. What a stark comparison to only two days before when we were immersed in the madness and congestion that is Parramatta Road, to now passing triple road trains, pulling up in a rest area and having a yarn with a truck driver on his way from Melbourne to Mt Isa with a load of Caterpillar parts. On Parramatta Road the only hint of conversation was someone having a crack at you for lane filtering at a set of traffic lights, or talking on their mobile phone inside their automotive bubble, largely unaware of the environment around them.

We stopped again to drink fluids in Wyandra — the heat and the weather were having an impact. We removed layers of protective clothing, revealing sweat-soaked T-shirts and singlets.

The road between Wyandra and Charleville had made news when a truck carrying ammonium nitrate exploded. When we passed through, the road had been reopened with a detour through the blast site and we saw the evidence of the force of the explosion. Concrete railway

We were ready with our cameras as the sun rose over the Darling River and the Old North Bourke Bridge. After a breakfast sponsored by the national heart foundation — bacon and egg rolls — the three bikes and the beer truck rolled out of Kidman's Camp and headed north, destination Charleville. The landscape continued to change, with vegetation becoming lower and browner. Small puddles of water here and there indicated recent rain. Enngonia loomed on the horizon and the dry, brown landscape changed for a short time to a green football field. We took a short break in the shade of a

peppercorn tree and rehydrated.

We gained an hour as we crossed into Queensland, missing the tiny outpost of Barrington as we blinked on our way through. Riding here, you can't help but admire the tenacity and willingness of the people — attempting to make a living in a harsh environment, dealing with heat and little rain, dependent to a large degree on the passing trade of tourists looking for that outback experience.

Several more stops along the way to Cunnamulla, including waiting for several mobs of cattle to cross the road, tended by the Australian stockman, cemented for me we were in the outback







footings, steel stanchions and railway lines were broken, buckled and moved. Trees had been denuded, lending an eerie feeling to the place.

In Charleville we spent the night at Baileys Bar Caravan Park, where the cabins were clean and comfortable and the owners of the park helpful and courteous. Air-conditioners were the order of the evening, ensuring restful and comfortable sleep. The next day was going to be hotter and 550km was to be covered. The day dawned bright and blue, with clear heads and the cool morning temperature. We ate breakfast at Heinemann's Bakery. With riders, driver, bikes and beer truck fuelled, Longreach beckoned.

As the sun climbed higher in the outback sky, the temperatures climbed accordingly, resulting in more frequent stops to drink. Just south of Tambo an excellent photo opportunity presented itself, with another icon of the outback — a windmill close to and accessible from

the highway. Tambo soon loomed large in the distance, offering another re-fuel and rest, but with several hundred kilometres still to go we didn't stay too long. During lunch in Blackall, a Herbie-replica VW Beetle kept the bikes company in the main street. Blackall was home to the famous shearer Jackie Howe, whose wife is credited with inventing the blue singlet. There's a memorial to Jackie in the main street.

By the time we'd stripped off our riding gear for lunch we were probably wearing less than Jackie. We devoured hearty hamburgers in record time, followed by a refreshing ice cream, then donned layers again, plugging in and connecting to iPods, music players, intercoms and headsets. It became quite a deliberate process of earplugs, neck scarf, jacket, iPod cable, helmet, sunglasses, gloves, climb on bike, start bike, select gear, ease out clutch, accelerate — we're off.

The addictive sound of the exhausts filled the air and we each wore a grin

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### **“We were spurred on to Bourke with photos from the beer truck and the R1200GS showing swimming pools and cold beers”**

as wide and expansive as the outback inside our helmets. We forgot the heat and sweat; the reason for the ride came to the fore again. The feeling of freedom, the feeling of being at one with your surrounds, the clarity of thought provided by being on a motorbike, the opportunity to extend yourself, the chance for reflection, the need for concentration, the feeling of exhilaration as you enter and exit the only corner for 98km, the combination of all these things inducing an adrenalin rush and experience that reminds you how good it is to be truly alive — something that comes from riding a motorbike.

After Blackall, Barcaldine was ►



**“The heat and the weather were having an impact. We removed layers of protective clothing, revealing sweat-soaked T-shirts and singlets”**

our next stop for refreshment and hydration. It's the home of the Tree of Knowledge, where the surrounding monument is something special — hundreds of pieces of timber of varying lengths suspended above the tree. The effect is quite spectacular.

The road from Barcaldine to Ilfracombe passed quickly. The constant of outback and rural travel — roadkill — increased significantly on the stretch to Longreach. The roadside was littered with dead wildlife — pigs, kangaroos, emus and other birdlife. The sheer number was astounding. The paddocks were largely bare dirt with very little vegetation and no green to be seen.



■ Herbie!

The red tail of the Qantas Jumbo waved symbolically to us as we approached Longreach, our ultimate destination. We stopped on the outskirts of town — R1200GS, F800GS, Tiger 800XC and the ever-reliable, ever-needed beer

truck. As we grouped together for a photo in front of the “Welcome to Longreach” sign, our smiles were broad, the sense of achievement palpable — we’d made it!

We made Kinnon & Co Outback Lodges our home for the next two nights — comfortable, well-appointed and great value, they are a perfect location. After we’d unpacked the bikes, we unloaded the Esky from the beer truck and opened some beers. While the washing machines dealt with our smelly clothes, we sat in and around the pool, enjoying the moment and reflecting on that other outback constant — a sensationally beautiful, golden-orange sunset.

The following day, after a late breakfast, we visited the Qantas Founders Museum and Stockman’s Hall of Fame. Both are a testament to the pioneering spirit, the tenacity and courage of outback Australians.

Now the challenge was to get back to our respective homes. The ride home wasn’t so much about the destination, it was about the ride. The chance to be in your own world, to reflect, to think of the past, to hope for the future, to plan your way through a corner, to smile as you hook up the entry, the apex and the exit, wishing intently for the next corner to be closer than 112km away, feeling the sweat build in your helmet, soaking up the unique smells and sights of the roadside, embracing the contrast of red dirt and big blue sky, searching for some shade on the side of the road to rest under, calculating the distance to empty and thinking of the next ride — knowing the destination doesn’t matter — it’s the ride that counts. **ARR**



■ “Stop taking photos and ride!”



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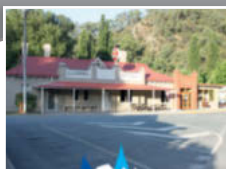
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# Riders' Paradise

**So, you want to go somewhere that doesn't require a passport, injections against diseases you've never heard of, and where people have a basic understanding of English? Try the southern coast of Australia.**





STORY: BARBARA JONES

PHOTOS: MARK JONES

**W**e started from home, in Far North Queensland, and decided to ship the V-Strom 1000 to Melbourne a month in advance. That was the timeframe given to us. It turned out the bike had been there two weeks when we finally picked it up, with two weeks of grot attached. Sending the bike down there was the easy part.

We'd been watching the weather reports for weeks and a really hot spell was set for the Adelaide region. So we packed the panniers with the all-weather gear and dressed fairly lightly for the flight. Of course, weather has a tendency to change quickly ... and so it did.

We landed in Melbourne in what for us

were unforgivably cold temps. If it needs more than three layers of thermals, it's not fit for human habitation I reckon. After a half-hour walk from the terminal to the luggage carousel we hiked another 1.5km back through the detritus of construction to the taxi rank, then to our depot to be reunited with our ride.

## MELBOURNE TO KOO WEE RUP AND THE RACES

A sunny but cold morning necessitated the thermals we'd packed as a last-minute thought given the temperatures at the time. Thanking the Gods of Pannier Packing for not letting us die of hypothermia, we set out towards Koo Wee Rup. This is a neat little town that advertises itself as the centre of

asparagus country.

It is also only a half-hour ride to Phillip Island, where affordable accommodation is simply not available during this the MotoGP weekend. Many people book a year in advance, paying fees that could buy the entire island in the off-season.

The tiny Koo Wee Rup Motel offers great prices, really nice little rooms, and the managers, Helen and Merv, make you feel like long-lost relatives. They love their bikie patronage — most of whom are retired whatevers, riding some really interesting bikes kitted out with every option. Their guests are also old enough to not fit the "bikie" stereotype.

The ride from Melbourne isn't really long so we hoped to check in earlier than the usual 2pm or at least drop off our gear before heading off to the island. ►







The room was clean and available. Helen and Merv ran a check on occupancy and remembered us right down to the CD they loaned us the last time we were here and welcomed us in. Dropping the panniers and top box off was going to make for a much more enjoyable ride to the island.

Phillip Island is far more than just a racetrack. It has wonderful rocky coastlines, is home to penguins and seals and an amazing place called Crazy Bird Beach. No, not a hang-out for demented female humans, but known for its gull and tern populations that make impossible dives into the heavy surf. A short walk leads you to a lookout where you can view these kamikaze fish-eaters.

The Gods of Race-Related Weather had apparently not been paying attention as it was a beautiful day, without rain or the dreary gusty winds the island is known for. It was the Saturday before the races, which we've been to a few times, so the qualifying day was just fine. Parking is easier, there's less traffic, you get to stand track-side to experience the rush of all that horsepower and speed

without being trampled to death by other on-lookers. And when it comes down to it, to actually "see" the race you end up watching on the big screens in the comfort of your home.

We strolled around to the various viewing sites and then dreamed our way through the Expo. This qualifying day is hectic but passable; on race day you need to be like a kelpie running over the backs of sheep to get anywhere.

After a few further look-arounds and ear-damaging decibels from the bikes, we were ready to head back to Koo Wee Rup.

## KOO WEE RUP TO LORNE

This, according to our plan, was going to be a fairly laid-back ride, taking the ferry over to Queenscliff and on to Lorne. With an early departure, we'd allowed enough time to cruise around the peninsula's coast. This turned out to be a damn good thing. The route the GPS took us was closed. A quick re-programming sent us on another route along some terrific country roads with plenty of time to catch the 10am ferry.







The closer we got to the ferry, the slower traffic was, with roads filled with other two-wheelers — cyclists. The closer we got to the ferry, the worse the two-wheeled non-engined congestion became. At the barred gate to the ferry, it all became clear: this was part of a lively Sunday charity ride called the “Bupa Round The Bay” ride. At least three million bicycles (lost accurate count after 283,721) were boarding the ferry designed for about 30 cars.

Lorne was once a small fishing village which has now become a place to curl up

your toes and relax. There are so many luxurious homes adorning the gateway to the “real” town. We found a nice enough motel — really nice when you’ve been riding all day — grabbed some dinner from the local supermarket and settled in to watch the GP races from the comfort of bed.

## LORNE TO PORT CAMPBELL

We were up early for a long, slow ride up the Great Ocean Road. We had done it in our now-belated Toyota Lite Ace

nearly 30 years before, but nothing can match it on a motorcycle. It’s spectacular: the iridescent blue of the ocean with pure-white breakers, the winding roads, steep cliffs to your right, sheer drop-offs to your left.

In this early-morning light, the sun makes the cliffs glow orange. And its reflection off the ocean surface has been called “the face of God on the water”. Even for an old atheist it’s easy to understand.

As we approached the Otway Peninsula, we turned inland at Skenes ►







Creek to head up a windy road that would take us through to Beach Forest as we reluctantly lost the ocean views. Instead we were rewarded with views of steep valleys harbouring amazingly tall conifers and stringybarks. A little further along there was a left turn, barely marked, into the deeper reaches of the Otway National Park and a sign to the Turton Tourist Track, a steep, leaf-litter-strewn narrow trail through what looked like temperate rainforest.

This part of the ride combined narrow but sealed roads and well-packed dirt trails through fern-lined gullies, and the entrance to the Hopetown Falls; pretty, but as falls go, ordinary really.

The Turton Track eventually takes you out of the forest and into farmland and soon enough we were catching glimpses of the coastline again. On the way to Port Campbell there's an amazing outlook to view the 12 Apostles. It can be cold and windy, but is so worth it.

Port Campbell was a welcome respite from the cold and the chance to do some laundry.

## PORT CAMPBELL TO PORTLAND (VIA WARRNAMBOOL)

Wary of the weather being as cold as the previous day, we kitted up with all our thermal gear, plus rain pants and jackets

as windbreakers. Contrarily, the weather warmed up quite quickly through the morning. Photo stops were coupled with peeling off layers as we progressed.

As we rode inland there wasn't much to look at, unless you're into cows. And don't pass the Timboon outlet unless you are armed with a good bottle of their local wine.

Another typical evening in and we were grateful we didn't need to check out the local night life. Given our ages, it might have been lethal.

## PORTLAND TO TALEM BEND

After a rest day in Portland, we hit the road again. The weather was grey so on went the rain gear. Crossing into South Australia and heading first to Mt Gambier, the scenery changed from vast pastureland to plantation timber. The road was increasingly dangerous, populated with enormous logging trucks that create a backwash equivalent to 3m waves. Rider diligence and skill keep







you from being sandwiched between these north-bound trucks. This forestry-dominated region is still part of the limestone ridge we'd been following up from the coast. And with limestone outcroppings come some pretty amazing formations, like the Sunken Gardens or Umpherston Sink Hole — an incredibly huge hole caused by an underground cavern collapsing in on itself. The owner of the property built a huge Victorian mansion and then set about sculpting

a garden out of the sinkhole. The garden reaches down some 30m and features a waterfall of vines, nooks and little pathways. The base is filled with flowering shrubs and annuals.

Back on the road to Naracoorte along the route obviously laid out by Computer Highway Designs Ltd ("we'll get you from A to B without any interest at all") it's all pasture, timber plantation, sheep, pasture, timber plantation, sheep, repeat ...

Before heading into Naracoorte we visited the Naracoorte Caves and Fossil Display. This is a world heritage site that has revealed a wealth of Australian megafauna fossils and is well worth a visit.

We made a beeline for the River Bend Motel at Tailm Bend, which was open and waiting for us. A ride to Murray Bend provided another one of those gems not on the map. This is why you go exploring, isn't it?

### TAILEM BEND TO VICTOR HARBOR

The Google map indicated that we needed to turn left, ride about 10 minutes and cross on another ferry to get onto the B1. Clearly sensing danger, the GPS insisted we turn right. Attempts to re-program resulted in complete drop out. Google maps was correct. We crossed over at Wellington and headed west. Here's the thing: our GPS did *not* like ferries. It could not provide a route across open water, much like vampires.

The road to Victor Harbor runs through dismal dreary landscape. The town is pretty much a tourist destination but does feature a horse-drawn tram ride over a causeway to Granite Island. The island is tiny but provided a nice walk-about after so much time riding.

We spent a day in Victor Harbor, a good opportunity for a sleep-in and not having to hurry for breakfast. There were some neat markets along the shorefront, a few souvenirs, and a spectacular evening display of lightning over the harbour.

### VICTOR HARBOR TO MURRAY BRIDGE

We headed out early, back to Murray Bridge, to catch the 10am paddle steamer. These appeared to be the oldest of their kind but are actually ►



### BIKESHIPPING

Wayne's Motorcycle Towing, a Cairns business, took care of shipping the bike to Melbourne and back. The bike got strapped to a metal pallet before being loaded onto a transport truck. The Melbourne depot is only a short taxi ride from the airport. It survived the journey without a mark and Wayne even gave it a wash before we picked it up to ride it home.



## AUSTRALIA'S SOUTH COAST

reproductions of what used to get people and goods across the river before the bridge was built.

This is a cruise you'd be proud to take your granny on. No, really, the captain and crew were great, the lunch OK, and provided said granny was into getting to the docks aboard a V-Strom, a good little easy day and the moment we were approaching the end of the adventure.

### MURRAY BRIDGE TO HALLS GAP

We turned east and started heading back to Melbourne. Leaving Murray Bridge, the attractions came mostly from the roads — that's until we discovered the Pink Lakes District, a region that has a bizarre feature. The lakes really are pink! No algal bloom or anything like it, just a chemical reaction between minerals.

A detour through Dimboola and The Little Desert National Park had us riding into Hall's Gap via Zumsteins. The windy mountain road was a welcome change from the straight and boring.

### HALLS GAP

This area features some nice walks, particularly the Pinnacles. Hall's Gap is a neat little town. It focuses on its Aboriginal culture and lunch at the Cultural Centre seems to include wattle seed in just about everything.

We did an evening ride up Mount



Williams to catch a beautiful sunset and spot the wildlife. They all come out at night so the ride back was taken at a prudent speed.

We now had to head back to Melbourne for our flight home. We took the back roads into

Bendigo, then Trentham, following the now faithful GPS to the bike depot. There we left the bike and had a quick change of clothes for the flight back.

What a great and varied piece of Australia for touring on a motorcycle. **ARR**







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# Pleasure



■ Waiting for the old ticker to slow down

## Who says you can't ride up the Bridle Track?

**STORY AND PHOTOS: RUSSELL COOK**  
**A**s Matho reported in *ARRIII* in his story on Hill End, the adventurous route between that location and Bathurst was closed by a rock slide. But getting through is not as hard as you imagine. We did it recently on a two-day trip of almost 650km, including about 200km of dirt. It was a great ride on some interesting roads, during which I managed to catch up with a few friends. One of them was Loz, who handled the dirt on his ZX-10R — so much for him claiming to be out of practice — and at nearly 70 years old he put in a fantastic effort.

We did some awesome roads. Between Lithgow and Bathurst we hit those through Sunny Corner and Dark Corner — fantastic sweepers on a narrow strip of bitumen. The Mt Horrible Road was anything but, at least in the dry. The only challenge was the stones. Limekilns Road to Peel was a faster open road. From Peel to Dumarama, north of Bathurst, there's another lovely bit of bitumen appended with some decent dirt. Then the Bridle Track's first salvo, about 17km of bitumen that is worth the trip in itself.

The dirt starts at the Box Ridge Road intersection and gradually increases

in difficulty until you hit Monaghans Bluff. It's nothing tough, just rockier and narrower. Further up the bluff, 30 per cent of the road has fallen into the ravine. You approach the fallen rock that has blocked the road, looking to squeeze through the gap between the rock and the cliff face, while climbing the mound of dirt between them. Anthony's 650GS breezed through. The big R1200GS needed a bit of finesse with the clutch to make sure the big boxer's exposed cylinders didn't scrape the rock or wedge against the cliff. The only proof of how tight it was: a slight scrape on the hand guards. ►

**“Other than the obligatory 4WD with wheels on our side of the road, and a red-bellied black saying hi to Anthony, it was just a good old-fashioned blast into town”**



↑ Pivot Pegs are a great addition for off-road riding



↑ These dirt roads are fine on road tyres



## THE BRIDLE TRACK

■ Father and son, waiting to be fuelled



■ Cheers to a great ride



If you try the cliff side you are on or close to the edge of the original landslide, which took a third of the road down the 100m ravine. That is *not* a safe place to try to get past. The Beemer cylinders only just made it through on the cliff wall side, but I doubt there are any adventure bikes bigger than the Beemer R1200GS. Any singles, F-class BMs and KTM twins

will find it a doddle. I'm a relative beginner to off-road riding and with a bit of concentration, clutch and throttle control, I made it with no dramas so it's doable for anyone with some experience.

Once through, it was 30km to Hill End. The first part is narrow with big drops and large, loose, sharp rocks. The cliff faces west so it reflects the afternoon sun's heat and we did it in 30–32°C. Working in leathers on the bike to miss the worst rocks and stay on the road took physical effort as well as concentration. Even with the Camelbak I felt a bit dehydrated. We followed the descent to the Macquarie River and finally saw the rock causeway where the Root Hog Fire Trail meets the Bridle Track. On to Hill End, there are a few more barriers in place along the way to stop adventurous 4WDs, but no issue for the bikes.

In the lowlands there are mud pools from the summer storms and small

patches of sand, which are shallow and didn't cause me any grief (I hate sand). A couple of these are made worse from the 4WDs going to campsites between Hill End and the closed part of the road. Of about six mud patches, only two caused any slides and at 5km/h these weren't a drama. I feathered the clutch with the feet down and ski'd through.

The pub at Hill End was a welcome sight and we rolled in just before four. Not bad from nine-ish at Kurmond, with lunch in Bathurst. A squash and a scotch in that order, but in one round — both went down a treat. We had a few drinks and using 3G reception on the upstairs balcony, made plans with other mates for the next day.

Decky had a slight change of schedule. A broken leg from your bike that's fallen on you will do that. Supe told us about the LandCruiser's unbreakableness — or lack of it, in this case. The net result was that Chris ended up coming to Hill



↑ The road gets narrow in places



↑ Yes, that's a ZX-10R at the back of the pack!





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### **“The Beemer cylinders only just made it through on the cliff wall side, but I doubt there are any adventure bikes bigger than the Beemer R1200GS”**

End to ride on with us. Loz agreed to meet us at the Rylstone Cafe around 9am. After a few beers and a couple of reds with dinner, we retired from the mosquito feasting to our rooms. Anthony worked hard all night sawing wood. We'd already discovered our room and the one occupied by the couple next door only had a wooden bi-fold door separating us, so sound and light flowed freely between rooms. Luckily there was not much more than banging of toes and snoring.

We were on the road by 7.30am. About 10km out a wallaby and I tried to get acquainted but the Beemer's

brakes were up to the task so no real drama. Then on to Sallys Flat Road, our turnoff for Rylstone. This is just a good, fun, open dirt road that climbs a few hills and offers an awesome view. It goes north-east and comes out on the Castlereagh Highway about 5km south of the Cudgegong Dam Road. This is an awesome run into Rylstone. Other than the obligatory 4WD with wheels on our side of the road, and a red-bellied black saying hi to Anthony, it was just a good old-fashioned blast into town. Coffee, rolls, a chat and right on 9am Loz rolls up. Well done on the timing.

We rode south as far as Cherry Tree Hill, then Razorback Road, Upper Turon Road and a few river crossings. Down Limekilns Road and along Mt Horrible Road in reverse direction for me and Anthony, but first time for Chris. Loz went via the tar and to get fuel at Yetholme. Dark Corner and Sunny Corner roads south are a great blast on the narrow bitumen, with great scenery. We regrouped at Portland for lunch, only to find there wasn't any. Wallerawang has a bakery-cum-milk bar for lunch and coffee.

We split up after lunch. Chris headed off for Blackfellow's Hand Road and Old Bells Line of Road; Anthony and I took the back way to Lithgow and then Bells; Loz travelled down to Magpie Hollow Road and back to Millthorpe.

We'd had a great two days out on a fantastic mix of roads, with the usual good company and good fun. Can't wait to do it again. **ARR**





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# Turning Back the Years

**So you want to restore your pride and joy to its former glory or do up that bike you bought for a song. Here are a few tips on how to get it done cheaply and easily**

**STORY & PHOTOS: MATT SHIELDS**

I've never bought a bike new, though I've ridden a lot of new ones over the years and always admired how good they look when they are new. After a handful of kilometres they quickly lose their lustre. The feature on page 98 shows a great way to keep that new-bike look longer.

But what about those of us who hang on to the same ride for ages or scour the classifieds and pick up that bike we wanted all those years ago that's a lot cheaper now? Chances are these machines have endured wind, rain, heat, drops, crashes and neglect. You can see it in a motorcycle at first glance, but you know that underneath the surface is a

quality machine.

Sure, you may get some degreaser into it and a good dose of suds, but this is only a clean. You need to get in close to tidy up the little things that make the entire bike look a whole lot better. This is a detail.

Car yards do it all the time. They have magicians who come in after a weekend of trade-ins and strip back vehicles of trim and carpet, then scrub, blast, paint and polish to make an old dunger look like it's worth nearly as much as its sticker price.

You can do it with a motorcycle too — be it to tart up the ol' girl because she's worth it, or to make it pop in the classifieds listings.

By no means is this a step towards or in place of a restoration; it's just a good way to breathe some life into a machine that is looking a bit tired or rough around the edges.

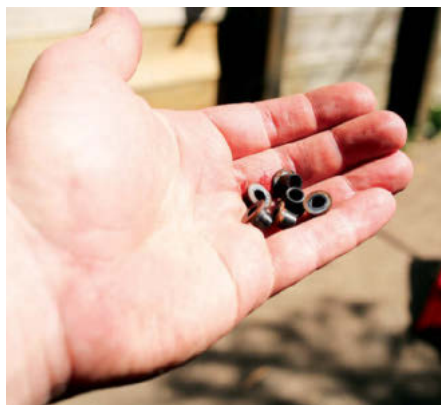


**1**

To start, pull off as much of the bodywork as possible so you can get to all those hard-to-reach places that fairings, tanks and the like make it hard to access. You may be able to see the grime with this stuff on the bike, but it's usually very hard to clean it out properly.



**2** When you are pulling it apart, be sure to keep track of every nut, bolt, washer, as well as where all the electrical and fuel fittings hook up. At this point you might find that some of the nuts, bolts, washers or spacers are scrappy or have surface rust. Replace them if you can, or brush them up with a spray of degreaser and some fine steel wool.



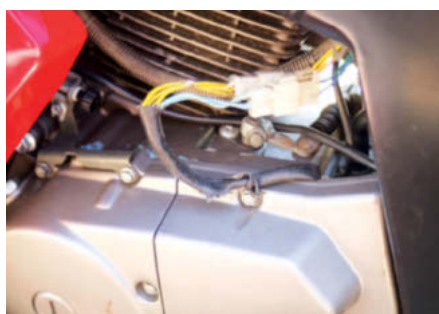
**3** If there's an entry point to the engine — airbox/inlet manifold, exhaust, fuel line — seal it so water doesn't enter the engine or inlet tract. There's going to be a lot of water in this process so seal it properly and check that it's doing its job regularly during the cleaning process. ►





**4** There are all manner of differently shaped nooks and crannies you'll need to get into and surfaces to give your bike the initial degrease. A toothbrush, small paint brush, very fine steel wool (0000 grade or finer) are what I like to use.

**5** Before you start, have a look over and see what needs cleaning. At this point you may find something wrong so it's good preventative maintenance in a way. I've found cracked crankcases doing this before. Look out for daggy things like gasket sealant that hasn't been cleaned up, also cables that aren't running tidily and properly. It might seem small and insignificant, but the quality of this job is in the detail.



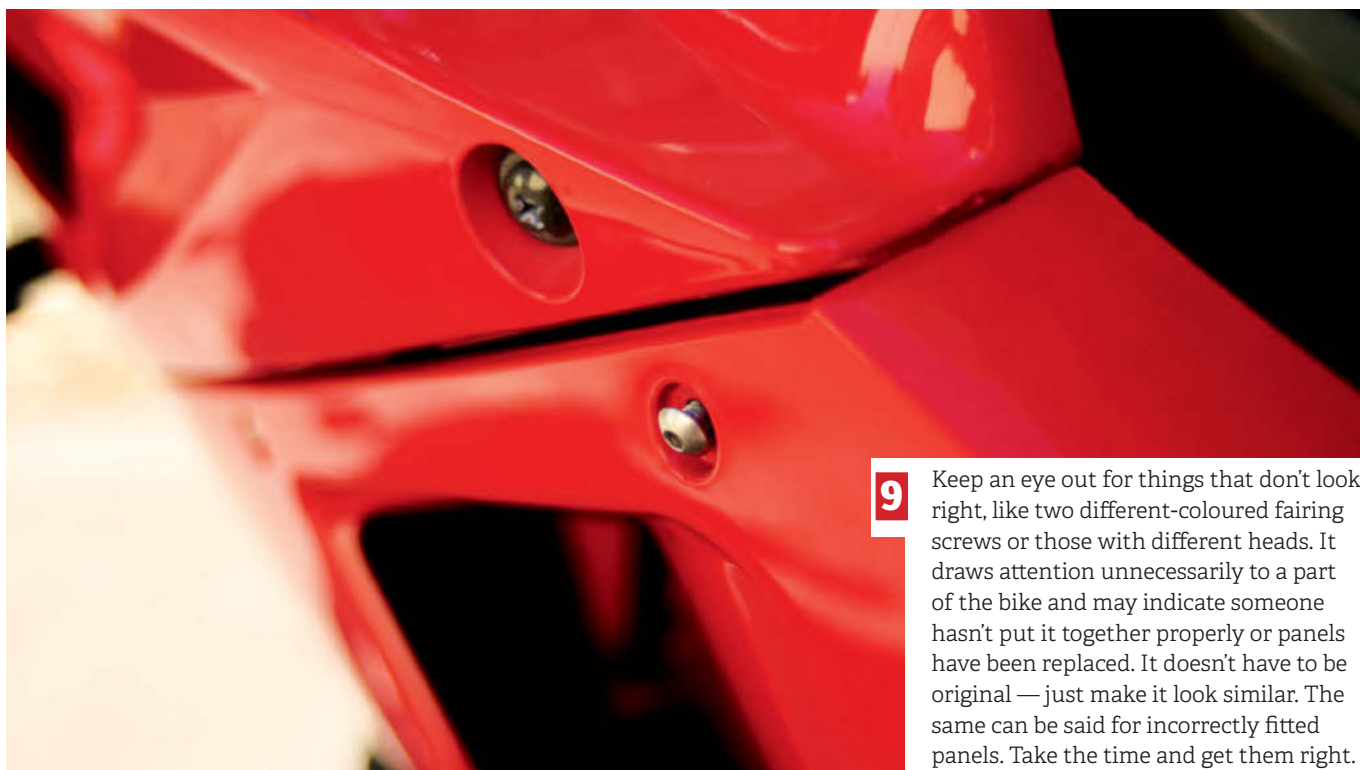
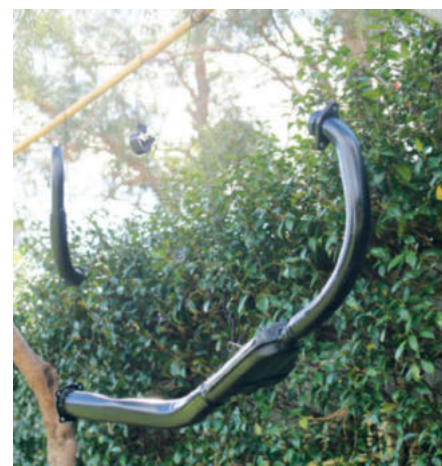
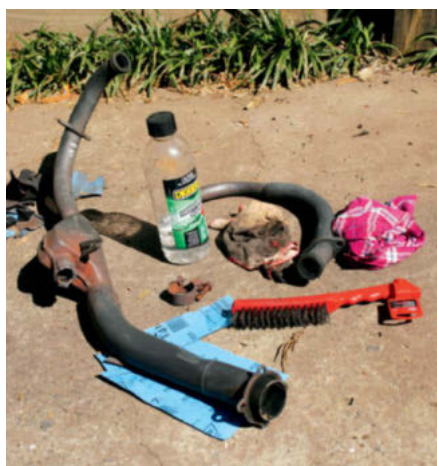
**6** The degreaser will leave a murky film on the surface so you'll need to get the suds out and give the whole bike a once over. Clean the inside of fairings and screens and be sure to pay attention to the inside of the rear mudguard.





**7** Now that the bike is quite clean, it's time for the fun/painful part. I start by applying a silicone-type spray — call it tyre shine, bike shine etc — to all the painted metal (frame, wheels etc) and engine. This stuff is dangerously slippery on tyres, brakes, seat and handgrips so keep it off them! It acts as a water repellent and gives the surface a nice finish.

**8** On some machines you may end up with a steel exhaust that looks like this. It detracts from the look of the bike immensely even though, on this bike, it is hidden under a fairing. You can still see it. There's an easy, cost-effective solution to make it look good. Scrub it back with a heavy-duty wire brush and do a final sand with a lighter-grade sandpaper. Clean the paint and rust dust with mineral turps and let it dry thoroughly before painting with a dedicated exhaust/high-temp paint. Maybe not as good as a professional job, but a hell of a lot better!



**9** Keep an eye out for things that don't look right, like two different-coloured fairing screws or those with different heads. It draws attention unnecessarily to a part of the bike and may indicate someone hasn't put it together properly or panels have been replaced. It doesn't have to be original — just make it look similar. The same can be said for incorrectly fitted panels. Take the time and get them right. ►



**10** Touch up those painted surfaces, like where the clutch cable has rubbed on the fairing bracket or where the seat has hit the ground. With paintwork, take the time to match it properly or it'll look worse afterwards. Fortunately, gloss black on frames doesn't differ too much so you can use a small art brush, spray into the can lid and dab on the imperfections. So easy a kid can do it.



**11** Particularly when you are selling a bike, pay attention to imperfections around the dash, like keytag scuffs and remnants of clamps or mounts for GPS and the like. Also, depersonalise the bike by removing any stickers you've put on it. Not everyone likes the punk rock bands you do or has as much Aussie pride as you do ...





**12** We are getting towards the end now so polish that paintwork. Check out the next feature on how to do it properly and what to use, but always make sure you do it in the shade!

**13** Have you got alloy or chrome like this glorious looking Ducati 750 Greenframe? Always approach this last and take your time. Surface rust on things like spokes can be cleaned with a fine steel wool and degreaser at the cleaning stage. A good-quality polish is worth the money and when you get into it, do a section at a time. The cleaning comes from the rubbing on and buffing off so don't expect a wipe-on wipe-off solution here. It's a painstaking yet rewarding job.



**14** At this point you have earned yourself a cold drink, so enjoy! *ARR*



## BASIC DETAILING KIT

- 2 x buckets (one for suds, one for degreaser)
- Toothbrush
- Paintbrush — 1in for finer points, big one for large parts
- Lots of rags
- Degreaser
- Detergent — not from the kitchen!
- Silicone spray
- Alloy polish
- Fine steel wool
- Cold beer



# Spick'n' Span

A close-up photograph of the front of a red motorcycle. The fairing is a vibrant red with a glossy finish. A gold-colored fork is visible behind the fairing. To the right, a portion of a headlight is visible, showing a silver-colored lens. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

**Get ahead of the game and keep your bike looking better for longer**

**STORY:** CRAIG PARKER


**PHOTOS:** JOHN CHURCHILL

**T**here are few better things in life than cracking the throttle along your favourite piece of blacktop. Mind you, keeping your road rocket looking its best for these special outings only serves to enhance the experience. The crew from Meguiar's offered to highlight a quick, simple cleaning regime that will keep your machine looking better for longer. ►

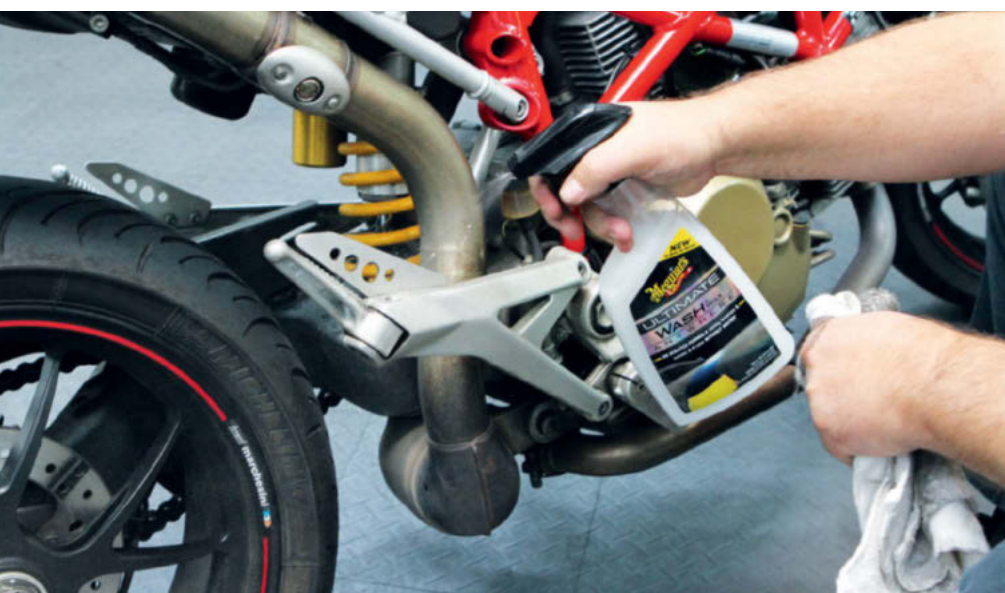








■ Wash 'n' Wax  
Anywhere is ideal  
for cleaning light to  
moderately dirty machines  
without the use of water.  
Spray on liberally and wipe  
off with a microfibre towel  
to reveal a clean, shiny  
finish.



■ On the dirtier, non-painted parts, use a terry towelling cloth with a single wipe-off method. You can even use a soft-bristled brush to get into the detail areas

---

**“Clean your bike every couple of weeks and you’ll be able to get your whole machine looking spick ‘n’ span in as little as 15 to 20 minutes”**

## WATERLESS CLEANING

Breaking out the mild degreaser and high-quality wash and wax is a tried ‘n’ proven cleaning method. However, using a high-tech waterless product offers several advantages. It keeps moisture away from sensitive electronics and you can clean your bike in the comfort of your garage — at your leisure. Ultimate Wash ‘n’ Wax Anywhere is Meguiar’s premier waterless cleaner; simply spray it on and

wipe it off. The key to its ability to clean without scratching is the way the specially formulated solution encapsulates dirt and grime particles to safely lift them away from the surface.

For painted areas, liberally coat, then lightly wipe over with a microfibre towel before going over the surface a second time, removing any remaining moisture with a separate, dry microfibre towel. As well as being a very capable cleaner,

Ultimate Wash ‘n’ Wax Anywhere also lays down a light, protective wax coating (see paint restoration) and it smells great to boot!

As you can see on this 2007 Ducati Hypermotard 1100S, it’s not just for painted surfaces, it works a treat at cleaning away accumulated crud from almost everywhere. Tyres are about the only area to avoid; small amounts of overspray is fine, however don’t go drenching the tread.



## FIBRE TECHNOLOGY

Never use rags to clean your bike, unless of course you like scratching the heck out of it. Microfibre cloths are not only softer, they hold the cleaning product better and their extraordinary fibres pull the crud away from the surface, trapping it safely out of harm's way. When moving onto heavily soiled areas such as the frame, brakes, suspension and wheels, switch to a terry towel as its longer, coarser fibres hold more grime. Bank on needing

**“While microfibre and terry towelling cloths can be rejuvenated by washing, cleaning extremely dirty and oily areas will permanently impair them. Best to dedicate a couple of cloths just for the grubby bits”**

more than one cloth to finish off all the very dirty areas.

While microfibre and terry towelling cloths can be rejuvenated by washing, cleaning extremely dirty and oily areas will permanently impair them. Best to

dedicate a couple of cloths just for the grubby bits. In fact it's a good idea to have dedicated cloths and applicator pads for each process; that way you're guaranteed against suffering cross-contamination. ►



■ Yes, you can get rid of scuffs like this in a couple of easy steps ...



■ Using a proper applicator pad will cut down polishing time and attain a better result. Firmly grab the back of the applicator (ensuring the surface remains flat) and apply a reasonable amount of pressure

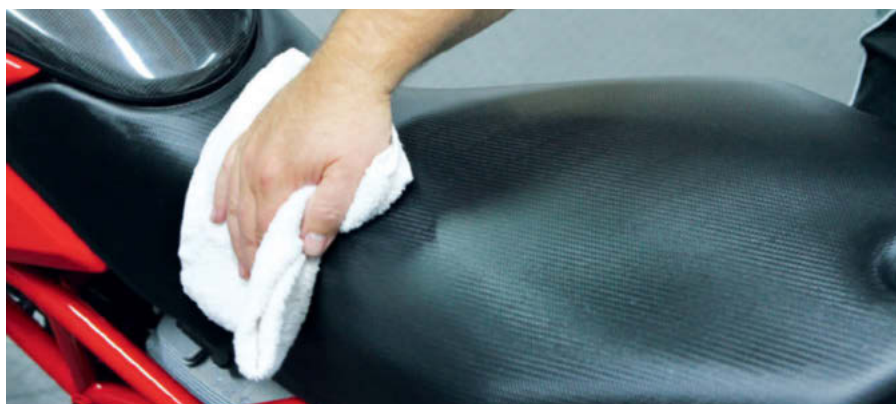
■ Wipe off with a microfiber towel and it's a done job! To keep your paint looking its best, it should be waxed three times a year.







■ When you get that white foamy action, you know the Cloth & Trim cleaner is doing its thing.



■ Wipe off the Cloth & Trim with a microfiber cloth for an as-new appearance, without leaving behind a slippery, greasy residue



■ New-looking black plastics are only a wipe away with the Meguiar's Ultimate Black Trim Sponges. They're ideal for treating the bits you want, without it getting all over the bits you don't.

**“After polishing, it’s imperative to apply a wax coating. Remember, wax does not make things shiny, polishing does”**

## PAINT RESTORATION

Unless your bike’s paint has been diligently cared for since new, it’s likely to have a plethora of light scratches, swirls and blemishes. Polishing them out will make your paint look like new. Deep scratches should be left to professional detailers or spray painters, of course.

Meguiar’s Ultimate Compound can be used with a buffing/polishing machine or by firm hand rubbing, which is perfect for bikes. After polishing it’s imperative to apply a wax coating. Remember, wax does not make things shiny, polishing does. Rather, the wax coating maintains shine by sealing the surface, as well as providing a level of protection against



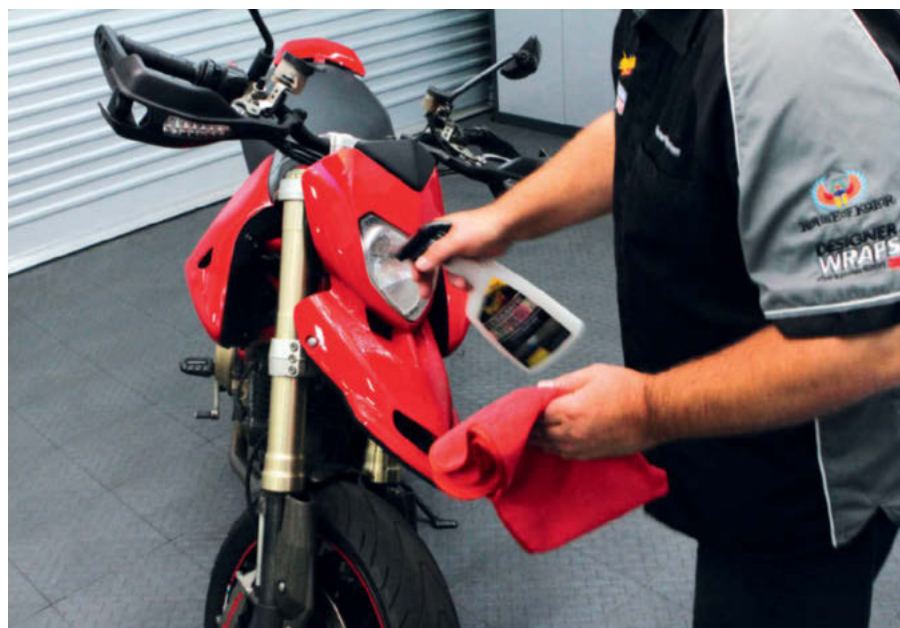
possible nicks, scratches, stains, along with UV and chemical attack (i.e. industrial fallout). Applying Ultimate Liquid Wax requires a lot less elbow grease than polishing; just be sure to let it completely dry before removing. Depending on how often your bike ventures out, re-wax three to four times a year. And while the wax in Ultimate Wash 'n' Wax Anywhere is not a substitute for real wax, it does help keep the protective wax coating topped up between proper re-waxing.

## BE SEATED

A slippery seat is a dangerous seat. That's not to say you can't clean and protect it. As with many vinyl/leather cleaners, Meguiar's Cloth & Trim Cleaner will get your seat



■ After sponging, give the black plastics a wipe with a terry towel to perfect the shine.



■ Keep your bike out of direct sunlight when cleaning. It'll allow the cleaning products to work at their best



■ Always ensure your cleaning rags don't pick up any foreign objects that may cause scratching of the paintwork

spotlessly clean and looking like new. What it doesn't do is leave behind any undesirable oily or greasy residue. It's also safe for use on plastics (no issues with overspray), however it's not suitable for suede.

## PLASTIC FANTASTIC

If your ride rolled off the production line in the last 15 years or so, it no doubt features a plethora of black plastic bits. Using a traditional plastic rejuvenation spray on a motorcycle can be problematic as you invariably end up with unwanted overspray on areas like paint, clear plastic, leather, glass pedals and seat. Meguiar's Ultimate Black Trim Sponges are the hot ticket. The product-soaked rectangular sponges are an ideal application tool, allowing you to accurately apply the durable, UV-protecting formula onto the bits you want, without it getting all over the bits you don't. Better still, it won't streak the next time you're caught in the rain.

Keep on top of things (i.e. clean your bike every couple of weeks) and you'll be able to get your machine looking spick 'n' span in as little as 15 to 20 minutes — even less for quick touch-ups between major cleans. Let things slide and you'll need to earmark a bit more quality garage time. *ARR*





# TESTING, TESTING

SO



that you can swap between the three configurations in moments without using tools, and they've put a lot of effort into ensuring the removable chin piece is structurally sound and as close to impossible to remove by accident as is possible. When I say there are three configurations, that's simplifying it a bit. It's actually six: the standard full-face set-up; full-face without the visor; open-face without visor or open-face with visor; and adventure helmet with chin piece or without chin piece.

The visor comes off very quickly thanks to a release system using a single lever on each side. The peak clicks on in place of the visor, or if you're going to open-face mode, a couple of decorative covers go there instead. The chin piece pulls off after you depress two buttons on its upper edges, both of which are positioned so that there's virtually no chance anything could accidentally press them. Two small caps slip into the mounting holes when the chin piece is removed, tidying up the finish. It's really that simple, and as long as you've got somewhere safe to carry the large visor, there's no reason why you can't use all three configurations during a

## SEE IT ALL

Vision! If you want panoramic peripheral vision from inside your helmet, buy a Nolan N44. No other full-face helmet has the wide-open view that this one does. In fact, I guarantee the Nolan is as good as an open-face for vision because this clever helmet converts to an open-face that offers the same view. It's only when you turn it into an adventure-style helmet and don bulky goggles that you lose any visual width, but you can blame

the goggles for that.

So that's four things I like lots about the N44: its expansive view, and that it's a full-face, an open-face and an adventure helmet. All in one.

The N44 is typical Nolan in its quality and construction, using a polycarbonate double-layered shell and the Clima Comfort interior. Nolan designed it as a "crossover" helmet — one that's meant to function as well in the city as it does on tour, in summer or winter. It's engineered







ride. It beats carrying two or three helmets with you!

I've done it a few times in the months I've been wearing the N44 and it's been great. If it's a beautiful day for cruising I'll run it in open-face mode, but if the weather closes in I can stop and, while jumping into wet-weather gear, convert the helmet back to full-face mode.

In any configuration, the Nolan is comfortable. The lining is soft and yielding so it sits on your head snugly without any irritation, and the long padded strips between your chin and the strap add to the pleasant feel.

The N44 is a bit noisier than many helmets and most of the noise seems to come from the large visor. The big vents add to it, of course. Earplugs are the go, making the extra noise a very minor price to pay for the advantages you get of excellent peripheral vision and good air flow. The vents — in the chin of the wrap-around visor and up on top of the shell — channel a large volume of air into the helmet, keeping the air fresh and the interior refreshing. It's among the best vent systems I've encountered. Naturally, they can be closed to keep out

the cold, and a removable chin deflector also makes the Nolan cosier in winter.

Like many other Nolans, the

N44 has a small flick-down tinted visor built into the shell. A small slide on the left side of the helmet pushes the visor down and a button flicks the spring-loaded action back up again. If you have the main visor removed, the tinted visor is adequate for superficial eye protection and keeps most of the wind from making your peepers weep, but close-fitting wraparound sunnies or goggles are still needed for keeping grit out of them. Behind a decent fairing, I haven't worried about the glasses.

This system is also much better than carrying a spare clear visor for night riding. When the sun goes away, you can simply flick the little visor up and ride on.

The main visor comes ready to accept a Pinlock anti-fog lens. The Pinlock is a worthwhile addition as the Nolan is as susceptible to fogging as any other helmet.

I've added Nolan's N-Com communication system to my N44, which comes with all the fittings to accept it. It's worth noting that the N-Com system, unlike many systems, is approved under Australian Standards and legal to use on our roads. We reviewed it a few months ago so I won't repeat the details, except to say that it's a good Bluetooth set-up that provides comms with pillions and other bikes; tunes well to FM radio; and is ideal

for linking to your phone or music player. I've enjoyed clear telephone calls with it. Because I use earplugs, I've always got the music turned up full volume, which works fine for my listening pleasure and ear safety but the speakers suffer some distortion, especially in bass-heavy tunes.

For versatility, the N44 scores 10 out of 10. Ever since I began riding I've owned both a full-face and an open-face to suit the occasion. Having a single helmet to do both jobs is fantastic, particularly when the system is so easy that you can chop and change in the middle of a trip. And there's the adventure-riding option, making my more recent ownership of a third helmet redundant. Someone at Nolan must have got a medal for this idea.

Nolan could have settled for that and we'd have been happy with the N44. But they've included all those other features: Pinlock ready, N-Com ready, inbuilt tinted visor, great vents, good comfort and the incredible vision allowed by the unusual but effective design. That puts the icing on the cake. At this price, the value is impossible to argue with.

— MICK MATHESON



## DETAILS

### NOLAN N-44 HELMET

**Price:** Plain colours, \$379; graphics \$419

**Sizes:** XS–XXL

**Colours:** Various plain and graphics

**Info:** [www.ronangel.com.au](http://www.ronangel.com.au),

(03) 9464 3366



## VALUE ADDED

Gaerne's SG-10 is a motocross/off-road boot that is designed for closed-circuit tracks and bush bashing. Why, you ask, are they appearing in these pages then?

Well, like many riders out there, I don't just don't just stick to the same kind of riding all the time. I know blokes whose motorcycle boot cupboards would rival that of Imelda Marcos, but not me. Sure, I've got a pair of touring boots and a set of race boots for the road and track, but when it comes to off-road riding, I want one boot for all occasions.

My off-road riding these days hasn't seen me on a motocross track in yonks and enduro riding is sadly only a fantasy as my weekends are filled with pedalling with my kids as they hone their skills.

So the SG-10s that started off as an enduro/MX boot in my former life have become my one and only boot for my off-road riding, which is, these days, purely adventure riding.

While Gaerne has some dedicated adventure riding boots in its range that are perhaps better suited to the cause, I prefer the fortress-like protection of the SG-10s. I'm one of those riders that tends to use a bit of foot out action when the going gets rough, too often forgetting I'm on a 260kg 1200cc twin and not a 99kg 250 single.

The ankle protection these boots offer is excellent and the upper of the boot encloses your foot very snugly. It's cushioned around your ankle and is very comfortable, but it can be a bit of a slog

to walk around in. That's a small price to pay for the protection they offer. Anyway, motorcycle boots are for riding and a pair of rubber thongs are always in my Camelbak for afternoon/evening festivities. That said, they have softened up a bit in their use and are easier to walk in.

The toe has a very strong plastic cap and protects your foot right back to the sesamoid (the ball on the bottom of your foot behind the big toe). The sole is a good thickness, the heel particularly, and they really work well on a footpeg without a rubber top (most adventure machine footpegs have removable rubber tops).

Getting your foot in and out of the boot is a snug slip in, but once you are in there there's no float in the fit. The buckle closure system is the best I have used on an off-road boot and can be closed with gloves on very easily. An elasticated ring at the top of the boot and a Velcro closure will keep most crud out, and they are reasonably waterproof, though obviously not as much as Gaerne's adventure boots. The plastic shin protection is excellent and has helped me deal with the blows of cylinder heads occasionally too.

You'd think the colour schemes are a bit lairy for a motocross boot, but the black and white colour options are very understated. Made in Italy, the upper is leather and so too is the inner sole. The lining is synthetic so it's easy to wash and keep smelling fresh.

Admittedly I haven't done as much riding in these boots as I have in my last pair of off-road boots — eight years is what I got out of my last set, with a sole repair and a few toe cap replacements — but they have stood the test of three years' worth of moderate adventure use. That means half-a-dozen multi-day rides a year, what most adventure riders would hope to do I reckon.

At the end of the day, the SG-10 isn't meant to be an adventure boot, but it will suit the needs of the more aggressive adventure rider or the rider who does a bit of motocross and enduro on the side.

— MATT SHIELDS



## DETAILS

### GAERNE SG-10

**Colours:** Black or white

**Sizes:** 41-48 (black) 41-47 (white)

**Info:** [cassons.com.au](http://cassons.com.au), 02 8882 1900

**Price:** \$599.95



## PACK TO THE MAX

Ogio's No Drag Mach 3 backpack is a pretty cool-looking piece of kit. I got given my KTM-branded one at the world launch of the 1290

Superduke R a few years back and thought it was a petrol tank as I approached it!

Its streamlined design isn't purely aesthetic — it does cut down drag noticeably compared to bulkier backpacks. The pack has a moulded shell to retain that shape and inside has all the mod cons you expect from a motorcycle-specific pack for the modern-day rider. There is a laptop, phone, tablet and shoe compartment and a helmet carry strap.

The phone pocket is fleece-lined and set at the top of the inside of the bag so you won't struggle to find it in a hurry. Thick zips close up the bag and an elasticised strap keeps your tablet or laptop in place. The central section of the bag has a decent amount of space to fit enough gear for a day or two away.

The bag sits very comfortably on your back. The shoulder straps adjust as fast and easily as a racecar safety harness and chest and waist straps keep the bag from twisting around on you. The waist strap removes so it doesn't scratch your tank if it does get in the way.

A clip on the inside of the bag will carry a hydration bladder. Alternatively, you can latch it to the hook strap so the bag doesn't fall open as you are digging through it.

Weighing in at just over 1kg, the bag is a comfortable, purposeful, stylish piece of kit that has been well designed to accommodate the needs of the modern-day rider.

While the KTM-branded bag is made exclusively for KTM by Ogio, the company has this bag featured in its extensive range of excellent motorcycle products.

— MS



### DETAILS

OGIO NO DRAG MACH 3 STEALTH

Price: \$199.95

Website: [www.lustyindustries.com](http://www.lustyindustries.com)

### DETAILS

KTM OGIO NO DRAG MACH 3 STEALTH

Price: \$189.99

Website: [www.ktm.com.au](http://www.ktm.com.au)





# WHATZ NEW

## GROWING FLEET

Compass Expeditions has introduced BMW's F800GS and R1200GS on its South America tours for 2015 onwards. The bigger, more off-road-oriented machines join the fleet that previously included the F700GS.

The F700GS is available with factory-lowered suspension and can also be fitted

with a low seat option, making it a less-daunting prospect than the bigger GSs for shorter riders.

For more information on the South America tours, or for that matter any one of Compass Expeditions' many tours or rentals around the world, visit [compassexpeditions.com](http://compassexpeditions.com).



## EASY REACH RATCHET

GearWrench is a US tool company known to put innovation at the forefront, and in the process create some pretty unusual hand tools. Its latest innovative tool is the Drive Gimbal Ratchet that gives greater access in tight spaces, bringing convenience to your fingertips.

The unique design allows it to fit perfectly into the palm of your hand, all the while ready to get up

and around any obstacle that stands between you and that hard-to-reach fastener. Available in 1/4in drive and 3/8in drive, the Gimbal Ratchet head can rotate on two planes. Built with a 72-tooth ratcheting mechanism, the Gimbal provides a five-degree swing arc and allows you to spin fasteners on and off in hard-to-reach areas.

**Sizes:** 1/4in and 3/8in

**Price:** \$29.50

**Website:** [gearwrench.com](http://gearwrench.com)







### TOO COOL FOR SCHOOL

Many custom bike builders favour the 21in front wheel and with more and more customised-style power cruisers released by manufacturers such as Harley-Davidson and Victory, the 21in front wheel is becoming a popular size. Up until now, owners have been limited in the availability of Whitewall 120/70-21 front tyres.

Avon has responded to demand and can now provide you with the celebrated Avon Cobra Whitewall in the 120/70-21 size along with most other popular sizes for cruisers and classics.

The Avon Cobra is a dedicated power cruiser, custom motorcycle and touring tyre that incorporates sports tyre technology and performance with incredible stability and longevity. The aggressive tread pattern offers fantastic water dispersion, dry grip and quiet rolling performance.

There are ultra-wide rear sizes available, including a unique pattern for the Honda Goldwing and fitments for bikes such as the Harley-Davidson V-Rod, Triumph Rocket III, Kawasaki Valkyrie, Victory models and more. Size: 120/70-21 (68V) MT3.50 for 2.75-3.75 front rims

**Price:** \$235

**Website:** [proaccessories.com.au](http://proaccessories.com.au)

**Contact:** (07) 3277 0693

### BEATING THE ELEMENTS

The AquaSeal technology of Rukka's new Armaxis jacket, teamed with the outer or inner jacket or combination of both, creates a jacket for all seasons.

Thanks to a special coating on their teeth, the YKK zippers are completely waterproof, even complying with the strict standards for personal flotation devices. As such, no elaborate flap is needed and the jacket can be opened and closed with a single flick of the wrist.

The Armaxis outer jacket has a highly abrasion-resistant, durably waterproof and highly breathable Armacor three-layer laminate. There are ventilation zippers

beneath the front pockets and in the back to deliver effective cooling. A soft neoprene collar and a removable storm collar optimise comfort, while adjusters on the sleeves optimise the fit. Six pockets — two inside, four on the outside — offer ample storage space. The external jacket is equipped with CE-certified protectors on the elbows, shoulders and in the back. The removable inner jacket is an elastic soft-shell jacket with a Gore-Tex wind-stopper membrane and a cosy inner lining. It has four pockets and is even great to wear on its own as a sport and casual jacket thanks to its style and fit.

**Sizes:** Mens 46-62 in black with reflective applications

**Colours:** Two additional versions sport red or yellow decor on the outer jacket

**Website:** [rukka.com.au](http://rukka.com.au)

**Contact:** Innotesco on 0414 814 194 or [sales@innotesco.com.au](mailto:sales@innotesco.com.au)





## NEW AND INTERESTING STUFF

### TURN BACK TIME

What better way to cast your mind back to the time of legends than by this stainless-steel wristwatch in the design of the speedometer of the Honda CBX!

Made in Germany for riders and fans of the legendary six-cylinder motorcycle, the large stainless-steel case with a diameter of 43mm and scratch-resistant sapphire glass echoes the CBX's speedo design. The black watch face sports a faithful reproduction of the orange scale from 0–240km/h that distinguishes the original speedometer on the motorcycle. For owners of a CBX with a speedometer that indicates the speed in miles, there is also a watch variant with a combined scale from 0–150mph or 240km/h respectively.

The odometer is set to 01047.0 as a nod to the displacement of the CBX and the tripmeter displays 000.6 and hints, of course, at the engine's six cylinders. The exclusive watch design is rounded out by a black leather watchband with stainless-steel clasp.

**Website:** CBX1000.us

**Price:** 1 19 (approximately \$172) including shipping and handling



### EXPLORE IN LUXURY

Touratech has announced the arrival of the Comfort and Breathable seats for BMW's F800GS Adventure to make those long days in the saddle even more enjoyable.

Designed to wick away moisture and leave a dry and much more comfortable

ride, the seats are purpose-built for adventure touring and packed with features that are designed and tested by travellers and adventure riders in real-life conditions.

The seats are specially contoured for adventure travel, with seams positioned strategically with comfort in mind. The

Breathable seat comes in two sizes and the Comfort seat has three sizes to choose from, depending on height

To see the full range of Touratech seats, visit [shop.touratech.com.au/vehicle-equipment/seats.html](http://shop.touratech.com.au/vehicle-equipment/seats.html) or call (03) 5729 5529 for more information.





## UNIVERSAL SHELTER

Givi's S180T is a universal transparent screen extender that is mountable to fairings or fairing screens.

The aluminium fitting kit allows you to adjust both the height and inclination of the screen and will redirect airflow and give greater wind protection.

The billet alloy mounting kit allows you to fit the screen without any holes or modifications required. It's a great way to give you more protection as the weather gets colder. Givi S180T Shield

**Website:** [ronangel.com](http://ronangel.com)

**Price:** \$159



## DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

After 40 years of creating touring and safety products for motorcycling, Oxford has applied its extensive knowledge and experience to its first full range of motorcycle rider wear.

Oxford's Mondial jacket is a fully breathable and waterproof textile jacket with a hidden integrated rain hood and a durable mesh on the outer shell. Built

with inner and outer waterproofing systems, the Oxford jackets allow you to ride through a shower or two any day of the week and multiple air vents offer maximum airflow without sacrificing safety or style if the weather gets hot. Adjustable waist, hip, upper and lower arm straps will ensure your comfort levels will be at an all-time high from the moment you put on the Mondial.

The jackets have a touch-screen-

friendly pocket, which allows the rider to store your smartphone safely and securely. The external armour pockets in the shoulders and elbows of the jackets provide ultimate protection and peace of mind for riders, just in case the unthinkable happens.

**Sizes and styles:** men's and women's, small to 5XL

**Price:** \$349

**Website:** [ficeda.com.au](http://ficeda.com.au)



# READERS RITE

## WINNER

### PEG LEGS AND SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS

Yes, BMW riders stand on the pegs crossing wooden bridges (ARR #110). This comes about from the times when trolls were common under wooden bridges in Germany and would take travellers crossing the bridges, unless they were mounted on a cart or a horse.

The BMW owner's handbook, page 86 under Safety Precautions, gives the advice: "Fahrer sollten sicherwecken beim Überschreiten Holzbrücken zu einem Konflikt mit TROLLS vermeiden." Translated: "Riders should raise themselves up when crossing wooden bridges to avoid conflict with trolls. This

does not apply to owners who reside in the southern hemisphere however."

I think it should be called the Secret Gentleman's Ride as the first I hear about it is in magazine articles. I suspect the organising is done by word of mouth among the gentlemen. "Keep it to yourself old boy, don't want all those other Johnnies coming along eh what, who knows who might turn up?"

**Alex Bowman**

**Email**

*I'm reliably informed that the next edition of the BMW handbook will advise riders in Australia to remain seated at all times so they present a smaller target for drop bears. — Matho*

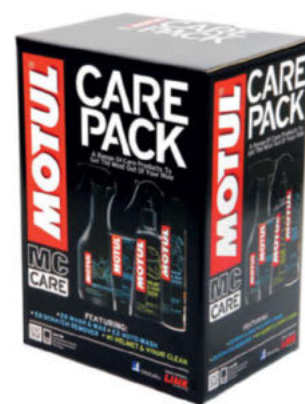
**D**on't forget to write! We mean it. We love to hear from you and everyone else does too; these pages are among the most popular in the magazine. Preferably, keep letters under 300 words so we can fit more in, though we will allow the odd exception without taking to it with the editorial knife. Yes, we will chop 'em when we have to. Do include your real name and some contact details, just in case we need to clarify something. Please write to [roadrider@universalmagazines.com.au](mailto:roadrider@universalmagazines.com.au) or send mail to *Road Rider*, Unit 5, 6-8 Byfield Street, North Ryde NSW 2113 — **Matho**

## WIN THIS, LOOK HOT

Every issue we're giving away this beautiful pack of Motul cleaning gear worth \$49.95. All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning is write to us. We'll pick what we think is the best letter every month and the top blokes at Motul will fire out this pack to whoever wrote it. Simple. Pack includes some of the best washing and detailing products on the market:

- Wash & Wax, a waterless cleaner that leaves a wax coating
- Moto Wash, good for all surfaces
- Scratch Remover, a micro-abrasive cream for painted surfaces
- Helmet & Visor Clean, to keep your lid and your view pristine.

Email [roadrider@universalmagazines.com.au](mailto:roadrider@universalmagazines.com.au) or mail to *ARR* at 5/6-8 Byfield St, North Ryde NSW 2113. We'll do the rest.



# MOTUL





## SEEN DOUBLE, HEAR THE RINGING

What a week. No sooner had I finished *ARR* #109 when #110 arrived in the post. Number 109 had thrown up a couple of issues, one of which was addressed in 110, namely the missing finale to the otherwise excellent article on border crossings. For an aspiring international rider, it was very informative. My international motorcycling experience to date was on the Isle of Man — no border crossings there, but some great roads, including the TT course.

The other article to experience a glitch was the excellent (again) and interesting "Hear Today, Gone Tomorrow". The breakout box on page 110 ended in mid-sentence. As someone experiencing tinnitus (more rock and roll-related than motorcycling), it was full of helpful facts. I've been trying to prevent the

tinnitus from worsening since re-joining the motorcycling fold about four years ago. Moulded earplugs are a part of my standard riding kit. I can now tackle some other possible solutions better informed.

I also must make comment that for a magazine with a sister publication catering for cruisers and trikes, I found it a little odd that of the four bike reviews in #109, two cruisers and a trike featured. Was there a glut of cruiser and trike reviews overflowing to *ARR* or a dearth of other category motorcycle reviews, or a combination? Anyway, I can't complain too much. Your magazine is a thoroughly enjoyable read, with its mix of bikes, bike journeys, riding gear and accessories, regular columns and well-targeted editorials, particularly with respect to law makers and enforcers, and some of their errant, wrong-headed, seemingly

arbitrary laws designed to do what is not always apparent! I'm sure I've missed something, but keep up the great work ...

**Steve Yorston**

**Buckrabanyule, Vic**

*The Isle of Man's a great place, isn't it? As for cruisers and trikes, I generally don't let our sister mag influence what I run in *ARR*, partly because I know we have enough reader interest to justify our inclusion of those bikes and partly because we offer a different kind of review. *C&T* mag caters more to the lifestyle cruiser riders and to "real" trike riders, as well as the new style of "roadsters" like the Can-Ams. In *ARR*, I guess you could say we try to do a more pragmatic review, for want of a better description. And of course, as you point out, we do cover a lot more besides! Here's to bikes, rock 'n' roll and a cure for tinnitus. — Matho*

## BACK TO THE FUTURE

Regarding Chris Smith's letter "Dressed for Success" in *ARR* 112, Chris asks "When are the motorcycle clothing dudes going to give some time and dedication to the suited-up city business lovers of bikes?" Chris, I totally relate.

There are lots of places I wanted to ride to without fronting up in biker gear so I created the Kosarider coat. It is a long coat, not a sports coat, designed to wear over business or dress clothing, or casual gear or even shorts and t-shirt, which I do here in Queensland. You stay protected without looking like you got off a motorcycle when away from your bike.

Sports jackets and business dress on motorcycles go back a long way for me. It started at the ANU in Canberra in the 1960s with my best friend and riding mate. We liked dressing better and that saw us looking for alternatives to the traditional leather jacket of the

time. Our bikes back then are pretty much considered cafe racer style today. We thought riding in a sports jacket or tailored leather jacket wasn't a bad look in those days. We weren't alone and the Distinguished Gentlemen's movement seems to be testament to this many years later.

Even back in the '60s this wasn't new either. After reading your letter I went through old photographs and found some of my father in the 1930s. He was an avid motorcycle rider in his late teens and early 20s. There is a photo of him setting off on a trip from Adelaide to Victoria in 1935. His touring gear comprised shirt and tie, V-neck jumper, sports jacket and leather cap. Another photo in 1939 shows him and others wearing similar gear, this time a longer coat for a sidecar tour to Sydney. But as you correctly noted, on today's bikes appropriate protection has taken precedence and created the current

mainstream biker look.

I reckon we do need alternatives and I have been working on it. My preferred transport was always a motorcycle and I needed gear that I could wear into the office and for business meetings without looking like I got off a bike. That's when I got the Kosarider coat. What a difference. In Melbourne, footpath parking is legal so I could park right outside my meetings or job. Pre-meeting chitchat invariably included CBD parking problems. There would be disbelief when I said I just parked out front. I didn't look like a motorcycle rider. My Kosarider looked like a long overcoat with business or dress clothing underneath, albeit a bit of a fashion statement for some.

**Peter Davey**

**Email**

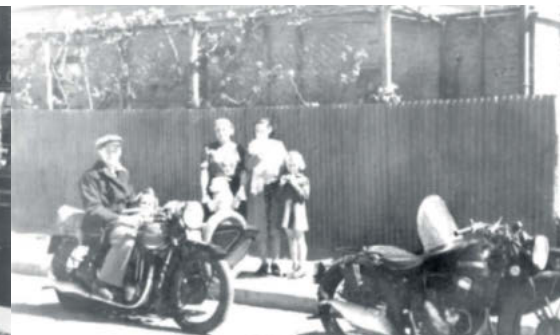
*Peter's Kosarider (kosarider.com) looks so good that we've organised Chris Smith to review one for us. Stand by ... — Matho*



↑ 4 May 1935 Croydon to Meringur



↑ Norwood Parade, New Year's Eve, 1938



↑ Outside Jeff Mordaunt's, 8 Clifton St, Maylands, Adelaide to Sydney trip, 1939



## THE TRUTH BEHIND IT ALL

After reading your article "Where's the Love At?" in *ARR* #110, it reminded me of an email which was doing the rounds a few years back. I think there could be a bit of truth in some of it.

Ian Armstrong

### TOP 10 REASONS WHY SPORTSBIKE RIDERS DON'T WAVE BACK

10. They have not been riding long enough to know they're supposed to.
9. They're going too fast to have time enough to register the movement and respond.
8. You weren't wearing bright enough gear.
7. If they stick their arm out going that fast they'll rip it out of the socket.
6. They're too occupied with trying to get rid of their chicken strips.
5. They look way too cool with both hands on the bars or they don't want to unbalance themselves while standing on the tank.
4. Their skin-tight-Kevlar-ballistic-nylon-kangaroo-leather suits prevent any position other than foetal.
3. Raising an arm allows bugs into the armholes of their tank tops.
2. It's too hard to do one-handed stoppies.
1. They were too busy slipping their thongs back on.

### TOP 10 REASONS WHY HARLEY RIDERS

### DON'T WAVE BACK

10. Afraid it will invalidate warranty.
9. Leather and studs make it too heavy to raise arm.
8. Refuse to wave to anyone whose bike is already paid for.
7. Afraid to let go of handlebars because they might vibrate off.
6. Rushing wind would blow scabs off the new tattoos.
5. Angry because just took out second mortgage to pay luxury tax on new Harley.
4. Just discovered the fine print in owner's manual and realised H-D is partially owned by Honda.
3. Can't tell if other riders are waving or just reaching to cover their ears like everyone else.
2. Remembers the last time a Harley rider waved back, he impaled his hand on spiked helmet.
1. They're too tired from spending hours polishing all that chrome to lift arms.

### TOP 10 REASONS WHY GOLDWING RIDERS DON'T WAVE BACK

10. Wasn't sure whether other rider was waving or making an obscene gesture.
9. Afraid might get frostbite if hand is removed from heated grip.
8. Has arthritis and the past 400 miles have made it difficult to raise arm.
7. Reflection from etched windshield

momentarily blinded him.

6. The espresso machine just finished.
5. Was actually asleep when other rider waved.
4. Was in a three-way conference call with stockbroker and accessories dealer.
3. Was distracted by odd-shaped blip on radar screen.
2. Was simultaneously adjusting the air suspension, seat height, programmable CD player, seat temperature and satellite navigation system.
1. Couldn't find the "auto wave back" button on dashboard.

### TOP 10 REASONS WHY BMW RIDERS DON'T WAVE BACK

10. The new Beemer suit is too stiff to raise arm.
9. Removing a hand from the bars is considered "bad form".
8. Your bike isn't weird enough looking to justify acknowledgement.
7. Too sore from a 700km day on a stock "comfort" seat.
6. Too busy programming the GPS, listening to iPod or talking on the iPhone.
5. He's an Iron Butt rider and you're not!
4. Wires from heated suit are too short.
3. You're not riding a BMW.
2. You haven't been properly introduced.
1. Afraid it will be misinterpreted as a friendly gesture.

## KEEP THE WAVE ALIVE

Great article, Gregor (*ARR* #110). Gathering such statistics is heartening but disappointing, be it a wave, lifted finger or the head nod. Camaraderie in the biking fraternity seems to be on the wane.

I wrote some time ago about the wave, noting my experience with other riders, given that I'd bought my first Harley, albeit an 883 Iron Sportster (ker-ching, ker-ching, ker-ching as more bling adorned her). As an old guy riding for a long time, the wave/lifted finger/nod always features in my rides, each depending on where, when and what I'm doing. It's hard to wave when one is in the middle of a tight corner, but a nod will suffice.

I soon found that the big Harley boys ignore you for riding a girlie bike and other riders were hesitant because you wore black and rode a very loud bike.



Following a light crash which wrote off my Harley, sending it to Harley heaven, I bought a 2007 Triumph Bonneville. Usually on my weekend ride to Lorne for a quiet coffee with some mates I continue to wave/lift/nod as much as I

can, now with mixed results. I believe that it's up to our generation to keep the traditions alive and hope others will get the hang of it.

Bob Schouten  
Geelong, Vic



## MR SMITH

What an excellent magazine the January edition is. Thanks to Mr Seddon for his article about Mr Smith (ARR #110). In the '80s, Mr Smith's regular column was the first thing I turned to when opening my latest copy of *Two Wheels*. It is him I have to thank for the power measurement of "possum skins". It was a review of some German two-wheeled hardware which stated the power was 'x'PS (I can't remember the bike or power level).

Mr Smith, through lateral thinking and logical deduction, came up with the reasoning that PS clearly stood for possum skins. I'm sure anyone today could Google the meaning of PS but where's the fun in that? His stories always started in one place, visited different and seemingly unrelated ideas before connecting them all and meeting back at his starting point.

I took part in last year's Distinguished Gentleman's Ride and it was a real hoot,

with an incredibly eclectic array of bikes to savour. At the end I sat and enjoyed a friendly beer with two chaps I didn't know from a bar of soap before the ride. With very little effort I raised \$300 in sponsorship from generous people with no connection to motorcycling at all. I'll give it another go this year.

As for standing on the pegs, it's all about leverage, not centre of gravity.

Dominic Graham  
Blackwood, SA

## WAVING

Glad you brought this subject back up as I've been doing a bit more observing and modifying my 1970s wave. This started after a ride with a friend of mine, Roland, when we did a day ride. When we stopped at the Pie in the Sky I remarked that I had waved to every bike that went past and that nobody responded. Roland told me that a lot did, but I was past them by the time they did.

None of my early bikes had fairings so it was easy to see a hand leave the handlebar for the salutation. In traffic it was a nod, but always recognition. So I started to wave, or nod, earlier and higher to see what would happen. Too high and they tended to slow down and not wave. *Trouble ahead?*

Weekends had a slightly better response. Weekdays out of Sydney was a big improvement, with the nod being the main response. I found the best, so far, is the hand out to the left with a nod when our fellow riders are still a bit further away.

Now maybe it's because of my bike, but cruiser riders are the worst for responding. Do they wave to each other? I always give a thumbs-up to L-platers and just about all respond with a nod. Maybe you guys could try various things as you get to ride such a wide variety of bikes.

Getting a response always gives me that connection that is riding. It says to me, "How good is this!"

Harry Stephens  
Pitt Town, NSW

## A NEW NATIONAL STANDARD

I read Gregor's article, "Where's the love at?" regarding hand signals to let passing riders know what is ahead or simply to say g'day. I was wondering if there was a national standard of signals so there would be no misunderstanding of what is ahead, be it police or cattle. It'd be good to have a simple paragraph or two with photos of each signal and a description of what it means. I am not aware of seeing a similar instruction anywhere before.

I also noted the lack of response from a lot of riders. I suspect that for many recreational riders, relatively close to home, they are meeting too many other riders to warrant a response in each case. For me, I try where the situation allows it.

Andrew Digby  
Brisbane, Qld

*The Yanks seem to have a system of signals worked out between riders but there's never been anything too organised here. A g'day wave and warning wave seem to be pretty obvious and are probably all we need. — Matho*

## WHERE'S THE LOVE?

Having recently rekindled my love of being on the road, it seems that the mateship of acknowledging fellow riders is dying. My first ride back in the dark ages was on a 900 Vulcan with the obligatory loud exhaust. I travelled just over 30,000km in three years before I had a little mishap that saw him retired a little early from the game.

I now have a GSX1250FA that I am really learning to love for longer rides. I have been given a wave that has slowed me down and definitely saved me from a ticket, and some big hearty waves that make you think the rider is some long-lost relative. A lot give a nod but, like Gregor says (ARR #110), the vast majority think their arm might drop off or they'll lose their super-cool persona if they return a wave.

If you're on two wheels, no matter what on, and you're shiny side up enjoying the ride, why not share the love?

Greg England  
Email

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# ROAD BIKE & SCOOTER PRICE GUIDE

## Can I afford it? Is there something better for the money?

**N**ew bike prices can go up and down like the stock market, so in every issue we'll bring you the sticker prices. To be completely up to date with things like factory discounts and incentives, check the *Road Rider* website ([www.roadrider.com.au](http://www.roadrider.com.au)) where we will bring you all the special deals, bonus offers and cashback promotions we can find.

We have included the importers' websites, which is the place to go if you're looking for more information. You'll see that we haven't listed every bike on the market (yet) but we aim to get

there with all of them. Sometimes even we struggle to find the details of the smaller, newer importers. Meanwhile, enjoy this most meaningful of Australian bike listings, covering the bikes you're interested in.

The prices are the most up-to-date ones available from the distributors. They may change, of course, subject to specials coming and going. We've also made it abundantly clear which prices are ride-away and which don't include on-road costs; the difference to your final payout can be significant, so don't compare apples with oranges.

### BRAND & MODEL WE SAY PRICE

#### APRILIA

[www.aprilia.com.au](http://www.aprilia.com.au)

Aprilia prices are maximum recommended advertised ride-away price.

##### Road

Shiver Sport 750 ABS.....	Oh so good.....	\$14,000ra
Tuono V4R APRC.....	Upright sportsbike.....	\$22,000ra
RSV4 R APRC.....	High tech, high spec.....	\$24,000ra
RSV4 R Factory APRC ABS.....	Racing black.....	\$30,000ra

##### Adv Touring

Caponord Strada.....	High-tech all-road traveller.....	\$20,000ra
Caponord Touring.....	Truly great all-rounder.....	\$23,000ra
Caponord Rally.....	The hardcore Capo.....	\$24,000ra

##### Scoters

SR50R Carb SBK.....	Biaggi replica.....	\$3990ra
SR MT 50 2T.....	Entry point.....	\$2450ra
SR MT 125 4T.....	Cheap commuting.....	\$3290ra
Scarabeo 200 ie.....	Crisp performer.....	\$4990ra
SR Max 300.....	Do it all.....	\$6490ra
SR Max 300.....	New 2014 Model.....	\$7290ra
SRV 850 ATC ABS.....	Large with the lot.....	\$14,990ra

#### BENELLI

[www.urbanmotoimports.com.au](http://www.urbanmotoimports.com.au)

##### Road

BN251.....	Nice starter.....	\$TBA
BN302.....	Italy's reponse to the 300cc LAMS.....	\$5590+orc
BN600i.....	Base-model mid-sized four.....	\$8990+orc
BN600S LAMS.....	New LAMS model.....	\$8990+orc
BN600R.....	New sporty naked bike.....	\$9990+orc
BN600RS LAMS.....	Another new LAMS model.....	\$9990+orc
BN600GT.....	Mid-size sports-touring.....	\$8990+orc
BN600GTS.....	LAMS model.....	\$8990+orc
TNT 899.....	Mid-sized entertainer.....	\$16,990+orc
TNT 1130.....	Naked dynamite.....	\$19,990+orc
TNT 1130R.....	More explosive.....	\$22,690+orc
Tre-K 1130.....	Out of the ordinary.....	\$18,490+orc

##### Adv Touring

TRE-K Amazonas.....	Be an individual.....	\$19,690+orc
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#### BIMOTA

[www.urbanmotoimports.com.au](http://www.urbanmotoimports.com.au)

##### Road

BB3.....	1000cc BMW, Italian flair.....	\$72,888+orc
DB5R.....	Light and lovely sportsbike.....	\$37,990+orc



The Aprilia Caponord 1200 ATC has had a makeover and is now the Caponord Touring. It is also now part of a range of three new models with the release of the Caponord Strada, the entry-level all-road tourer of the family, and the pictured Caponord Rally, the adventure tourer that comes standard with a larger 19in front wheel, hard aluminium panniers, hand guards and an adjustable windscreen for \$24,000 ride away.

DB8 Bi Posto.....	Sleek and powerful.....	\$47,990+orc
DB8 SP.....	The sweetest candy.....	\$47,990+orc
DB8 Oro Nero.....	Expensive excitement.....	\$84,990+orc
Tesi 3D Naked.....	The full skeleton on show.....	\$55,990+orc
DB9.....	Muscle streetfighter.....	\$44,990+orc
DB9S.....	Sharper on the street.....	\$46,990+orc
DB10.....	Sharp style.....	\$37,290+orc
DB11.....	Testastretta 11 at last.....	\$56,990+orc

#### BMW

[www.bmwmotorrad.com.au](http://www.bmwmotorrad.com.au)

##### Road

F 800 R.....	Neat naked parallel-twin.....	\$13,100+orc
S 1000 R.....	Naked supermodel.....	\$19,290+orc
S 1000 RR.....	Still the one to beat.....	\$22,990+orc
HP4 Competition.....	For serious sports riders.....	\$32,450+orc





■ Benelli's first foray into the 300cc market, the BN302, will cost you \$5590+orc

R 1200 R.....	Now with liquid cooling.....	\$21,950+orc
R 1200 R Sport .....	Naked and fit boxer .....	\$22,350+orc
R 1200 R Exclusive.....	Naked and special boxer.....	\$22,350+orc
R nineT.....	Simplicity with max style.....	\$21,250+orc
R 1200 RT.....	Have your cake and eat it.....	\$30,790+orc
K 1300 R.....	Evil Wulf.....	\$21,990+orc
K 1300 S.....	Autobahn eater.....	\$23,990+orc
K 1300 S Motorsport.....	Flashy sports-tourer for 2015.....	\$28,990+orc
K 1600 GT.....	Power touring.....	\$35,990+orc
K 1600 GT Sport.....	Luxury but lighter, sportier.....	\$36,490+orc
K 1600 GTL.....	Euro luxury touring.....	\$37,590+orc
K 1600 GTL Exclusive.....	VIP.....	\$42,500+orc

## Adv Touring

G 650 GS.....	You'll be surprised .....	\$9990+orc
G 650 GS Sertao.....	Rough it or not.....	\$10,990+orc
F 700 GS.....	Not really a 700 .....	\$12,890+orc
F 700 GS .....	Low suspension model .....	\$13,140+orc
F 800 GS.....	Great adv tourer.....	\$16,690+orc
F 800 GS.....	Low suspension model .....	\$16,940+orc
F 800 GS Adventure .....	Go further.....	\$18,650+orc
F 800 GT.....	Dynamically designed.....	\$16,300+orc
R 1200 GS.....	All-road master.....	\$21,950+orc
R 1200 GS Adventure.....	Luxuriously roughing it.....	\$24,550+orc

## Scooter

C 600 Sport.....	Sporty maxi.....	\$13,990+orc
C 600 Sport Special Edition.....	Here in October .....	\$15,090+orc
C 650 GT.....	Let's tour!.....	\$14,990+orc
C 650 GT Special Edition .....	Seat heating.....	\$16,665+orc
C 650 GT SE LS.....	Low suspension model .....	\$16,465+orc

## BOLLINI

[www.motorsportimporters.com.au](http://www.motorsportimporters.com.au)

### Road

Speed 200.....	Economy ticket .....	\$2290+orc
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### Cruiser

Retro 200.....	New release .....	\$TBA
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## CAN-AM (BRP)

[www.brp.com](http://www.brp.com)

### Road

Spyder RS SM5.....	The "Spyder" experience .....	\$19,990+orc
Spyder RSS SE5.....	Supersports auto.....	\$23,990+orc
Spyder ST SE5.....	The sports-touring Spyder.....	\$25,490+orc
Spyder ST LTD SE5.....	The ST with more.....	\$28,990+orc
Spyder RT SM6.....	New 1330cc triple engine.....	\$31,490+orc
Spyder RTS SE6.....	RT plus semi-auto and more .....	\$39,990+orc
Spyder RT Limited SE6.....	The full touring triple .....	\$41,990+orc

## CF MOTO

[www.cfmoto.com.au](http://www.cfmoto.com.au)

### Road

VNight.....	Great learner.....	\$2690+orc
Jetmax 250.....	Freeway capable scooter.....	\$4190+orc
Leader.....	Not fussy .....	\$2190+orc

650NK.....	May ruffle some feathers.....	\$6290+orc
650TK.....	Bargain touring.....	\$7749+orc

### Cruiser

V5.....	Where's the engine?.....	\$4190+orc
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## CONFEDERATE

[www.urbanmotoimports.com.au](http://www.urbanmotoimports.com.au)

### Cruiser

X132 Hellcat.....	Badass .....	\$79,990+orc
X132 Hellcat Combat.....	American war machine .....	\$94,990+orc
X135 Wraith .....	Available soon .....	\$TBA

## DAELIM

[www.daelim.com.au](http://www.daelim.com.au)

### Road

VJF250.....	Adequate style.....	\$3990+orc
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### Cruiser

Daystar 250 EFI.....	Fat, feet-forward cruiser .....	\$4920+orc
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### Scooter

Bbone.....	Its clothes are off.....	\$3490+orc
Besbi.....	Small and cute.....	\$2190+orc
S1.....	Nice style.....	\$2990+orc

■ Ducati's 821 and 1200 Monsters are now available in red, white and also striped models. The pictured Monster 821 Stripe is available only on order for \$17,990+orc. All other models are ready to go in dealerships



## DUCATI

[www.ducati.com.au](http://www.ducati.com.au)

### Road

Monster 659 ABS.....	Monster the LAM .....	\$12,990+orc
Ducati Scrambler Icon (Ducati Red) Entry-level.....		\$12,990+orc
Ducati Scrambler Icon ('62 Yellow) As above but yellower.....		\$13,140+orc
Ducati Scrambler Urban Enduro ...	For the burbs and backroads .....	\$14,990+orc
Ducati Scrambler Classic.....	Living in the '70s .....	\$14,990+orc
Ducati Scrambler Full Throttle.....	Flat track performer.....	\$14,990+orc
Monster 821 Dark .....	The little beast steps up.....	\$16,290+orc
Streetfighter 848.....	Precision fighter, special price.....	\$18,990+orc
Panigale 899 Red.....	Smaller, sweeter superbike .....	\$19,990+orc
Panigale 899 .....	In white .....	\$20,490+orc
Hypermotard Red .....	A hooligan on wheels.....	\$16,990+orc
Hypermotard .....	In black.....	\$17,290+orc
Hypermotard SP.....	With tricked-up suspension .....	\$21,490+orc
Hyperstrada.....	Manners & madness .....	\$17,990+orc
Monster 1200 .....	With stripes — order only .....	\$25,490+orc
Monster 1200 S Red.....	With better bits .....	\$24,290+orc
Monster 1200 S.....	In white .....	\$24,490+orc
Panigale 1199 ABS.....	Updated 2014 Model.....	\$26,990+orc
Panigale S ABS.....	Electronic Öhlins! .....	\$33,990+orc
Panigale R ABS.....	Race passion.....	\$45,990+orc

### Cruiser

Diavel .....	A true power-cruiser .....	\$24,490+orc
Diavel Carbon Red.....	Deal with the devil .....	\$30,290+orc
Diavel Carbon White.....	An angel in disguise? .....	\$30,490+orc



Diavel Titanium ..... Harder than steel ..... \$39,990+orc

#### Adv Touring

Multistrada 1200 ABS ..... 4 in 1 with ABS ..... \$22,990+orc  
 Multistrada 1200 STouring ..... See the world ..... \$28,490+orc  
 Multistrada 1200 S Pikes Peak ..... Flashy paint job ..... \$31,990+orc  
 Multistrada 1200 Granturismo ..... Tour perfection ..... \$30,490+orc

#### ERIK BUELL RACING

[www.urbanmotoimports.com.au](http://www.urbanmotoimports.com.au)

#### Road

1190RS Carbon ..... 175hp, 176kg of joy ..... \$56,990+orc  
 1190RX ..... Sporting masterpiece ..... \$26,490+orc  
 1190SX ..... Superbike basis ..... \$23,490+orc  
 1190AX ..... The adventurous one ..... \$TBA

#### HARLEY-DAVIDSON

[www.harley-davidson.com](http://www.harley-davidson.com)

All H-D prices are ride-away.

#### Cruiser

XG500 Street 500 ..... Learner legal ..... \$9995ra  
 XL883L SuperLow ..... For the shorties ..... \$14,750ra  
 XL883N Iron 883 ..... Iron tough ..... \$14,995ra  
 XL1200C Custom ..... Customary show off ..... \$18,750ra  
 XL1200X Forty-Eight ..... Retro cool ..... \$18,995ra  
 XL1200V Seventy-Two ..... Vintage muscle ..... \$18,495ra  
 XL1200T Super Low ..... Cool little tourer ..... \$19,250ra  
 VRSCDX Night Rod Special ..... Drag bike ..... \$27,250ra  
 VRSCF Muscle ..... Muscle me ..... \$26,995ra  
 FXDB Street Bob ..... Versatile ..... \$22,495ra  
 FXDBB Street Bob Special ..... Street smarts ..... \$23,995ra  
 FXDL Low Rider ..... Not laying low ..... \$23,495ra  
 FXDWG Wide Glide ..... Let your hair hang down ..... \$24,995ra  
 FXDF Fat Bob ..... Lay off the burgers, Bob! ..... \$25,495ra  
 FLD Dyna Switchback ..... Dress up, dress down ..... \$26,250ra  
 FLS Softail Slim ..... Slim, yet PH fat! ..... \$26,250ra  
 FXST Softail Standard ..... The original ride ..... \$27,250ra  
 FLSTFB Fat Boy Lo ..... Low bruiser ..... \$28,750ra  
 FLSTF Fat Boy ..... Big bruiser ..... \$28,995ra  
 FLSTN Softail Deluxe ..... Classy dude ..... \$28,995ra  
 FLSTNSE CVO Softail Deluxe ..... 110ci, LEDs plus ..... \$44,995ra  
 FXSB Breakout ..... Urban street styling ..... \$29,495ra  
 FLSTC Heritage S'tail Classic ..... Visually beautiful ..... \$29,995ra  
 FLHRC Road King Classic ..... Be the king ..... \$32,495ra  
 FLHXS Street Glide Special ..... The original bagger ..... \$34,995ra  
 FLHXSE CVO Street Glide ..... 110ci ripper ..... \$46,995ra  
 FLTRXS Road Glide Special ..... Dynamic, fixed-fairing tourer ..... \$34,495ra  
 FLTRXSE CVO Rd Glide Ultra ..... Maybe H-D's best tourer ..... \$48,995ra  
 FLHTK Electra Glide Ultra Ltd ..... Works burger ..... \$37,995ra  
 FLHTKSE CVO Ultra Ltd ..... 110ci mega-tourer ..... \$50,995ra

#### HONDA

[www.honda.com.au](http://www.honda.com.au)

#### Road

CB125E ..... Cheap commuter ..... \$2099+orc  
 CB300FA ..... 250cc weight, 300cc power ..... \$5699+orc  
 CBR300 ..... Big H attacks the Ninja 300 ..... \$5699+orc  
 CBR300 ABS ..... The anti-lock brake option ..... \$5999+orc  
 CBR300R ..... Special edition ..... \$5799+orc  
 CBR300R ..... Special edition ABS ..... \$6099+orc  
 CB400 ..... Bulletproof ..... \$10,099+orc  
 CB400A ABS ..... Foolproof ..... \$11,199+orc  
 CBR500R ..... Sporty little twin ..... \$7499+orc  
 CBR500R ABS ..... ABS option ..... \$7799+orc  
 CB500F ABS ..... Sweet as ..... \$7499+orc  
 CB650F ABS ..... New naked four ..... \$9999+orc  
 CBR600RR ..... Versatile supersport ..... \$14,390+orc  
 CBR650F ABS ..... Mid-ranger with torque ..... \$10,599+orc



■ Kawasaki has released its first LAMS-approved streetfighter, the Z300, standard with ABS. Presenting sporty features, it is available in a range of colours for \$5999+orc

NC750SA ABS ..... A little boosted for 2014 ..... \$8799+orc  
 CTX700A ..... A fairing for the open road ..... \$7399+orc  
 CTX700DA ..... Dual Clutch Transmission ..... \$10,899+orc  
 VFR800 ..... Tried and true package ..... \$14,599+orc  
 VFR800x Crossrunner ..... Sports-tourer goes all-round ..... \$14,499+orc  
 CBR1000RR ..... Ride what Casey rides ..... \$16,899+orc  
 CBR1000RR ABS ..... Blade with braking backup ..... \$17,899+orc  
 VFR1200F ABS ..... For the tech heads ..... \$16,999+orc  
 GL1800B F6B ..... Stripped Wing ..... \$25,199+orc  
 GL1800 Goldwing Luxury ..... The ultimate luxury tourer ..... \$35,799+orc

#### Cruiser

VT400 ..... Classic-styled LAM ..... \$9399+orc  
 CTX700N ABS ..... A bike for everything ..... \$9099+orc  
 VT750C Shadow ..... Classic appeal ..... \$11,749+orc  
 CTX1300 ..... V4 cruiser with unique style ..... \$18,499+orc  
 VT1300CX Fury ..... Chopped dragster ..... \$15,599+orc  
 GL1800C F6C Valkyrie ..... Valkyrie returns with muscle ..... \$20,199+orc

#### Adv Touring

CB500X ABS ..... Adventure sports ..... \$7599+orc  
 VFR1200X Crosstourer ABS ..... Smooth and comfy all-roader ..... \$17,499+orc

#### Scooter

Dio 110 ..... New kid in town ..... \$2549+orc  
 PCX150 ..... Stylish and practical ..... \$4199+orc  
 NSS300 Forza ..... Sporty and flexible ..... \$6999+orc  
 NC700D Integra ..... Motorcycle or scooter? ..... \$11,199+orc

#### HYOSUNG

[www.hyosung.com.au](http://www.hyosung.com.au)

#### Road

GT250 ..... Great beginner ..... \$2990+orc  
 GT650 ..... Naked value and style ..... \$5190+orc  
 GT650R ..... Easy, sporty, affordable ..... \$5490+orc

#### Cruiser

GV250 Aquila ..... Little cutie ..... \$3990+orc  
 GV650C Aquila Classic ..... LAMS value ..... \$6490+orc

#### INDIAN MOTORCYCLE

[www.indianmotorcycle.com.au](http://www.indianmotorcycle.com.au)

#### Cruiser

Scout ..... Sportster meets V-Rod? ..... \$17,995ra  
 Chief ..... Leading the tribe back! ..... \$28,995ra  
 Chief Vintage ..... Signature heritage aesthetic ..... \$31,495ra  
 Chieftain ..... First Indian tourer/bagger ..... \$35,995ra  
 Roadmaster ..... Full-dress tourer ..... \$38,995ra



**KAWASAKI**[www.kawasaki.com.au](http://www.kawasaki.com.au)**Road**

Z300 ABS .....	Ninja turned streetfighter .....	\$5999+orc
Ninja 300 .....	Even better again! .....	\$6199+orc
Ninja 300 SE .....	Tastes like lime .....	\$6399+orc
Ninja 300 SE ABS .....	30th Anniversary edition .....	\$6899+orc
ER-6n/nL ABS .....	Quirky .....	\$9999+orc
Ninja 650/L ABS .....	Mid-sized gem .....	\$10,499+orc
Ninja ZX-6R (599) .....	Striking .....	\$14,999+orc
Ninja ZX-6R ABS (636) SE .....	Bigger, grunter, prettier .....	\$16,649+orc
Z800 ABS .....	Sharper .....	\$12,999+orc
W800SE .....	Nostalgic, relaxed cruising .....	\$12,499+orc
Z1000 ABS SE .....	Special edition .....	\$16,799+orc
Ninja 1000 ABS .....	A sword with soul .....	\$16,999+orc
Ninja ZX-10R .....	Non-ABS 30th Anniv model .....	\$18,999+orc
Ninja ZX-10R ABS .....	30th Anniversary model .....	\$20,699+orc
1400GTR ABS .....	Transcontinental .....	\$24,999+orc
Ninja ZX-14R ABS SE .....	Special edition .....	\$20,299+orc
Ninja ZX-14R ABS SE Öhlins .....	Öhlins, white, gold, scorching .....	\$21,799+orc

**Cruiser**

Vulcan 900 Classic SE .....	Classically glamorous .....	\$12,499+orc
Vulcan 1700 Classic ABS .....	Great blank canvas .....	\$19,999+orc
Vulcan 1700 Nomad ABS .....	Add a bit of bling .....	\$22,999+orc
Vulcan 1700 Vaquero ABS .....	Go to the dark side .....	\$24,499+orc
Vulcan 1700 Voyager ABS .....	Plush ride .....	\$24,499+orc

**Adv Touring**

KLR650 .....	Bargain with a capital B .....	\$8099+orc
Versys 650 ABS .....	Appealing all-rounder .....	\$9999+orc
Versys 650L ABS .....	LAMS model .....	\$9999+orc
Versys 1000 .....	Bitumen burner .....	\$15,999+orc

**KTM**[www.ktm.com.au](http://www.ktm.com.au)**Road**

390 Duke .....	Ninja beater? .....	\$7495+orc
390 RC .....	All new available soon .....	\$8295+orc
690 Duke R .....	The sportier motard .....	\$14,495+orc
1190 RC8 R .....	The orange flash .....	\$25,995+orc
1290 Super Duke R .....	Ballsy streetfighter .....	\$24,995+orc

**Adv Touring**

690 Enduro R .....	Extreme riders only .....	\$14,695+orc
1050 Adventure .....	Adventure stripped bare .....	\$17,995+orc
1190 Adventure .....	High-tech adventurer .....	\$23,995+orc
1190 Adventure R .....	Add more adventure .....	\$24,995+orc
1290 Super Adventure .....	The ultimate Adventure .....	\$26,995+orc

**KYMCO**[www.kymco.com.au](http://www.kymco.com.au)**Road**

CK 125 .....	No nonsense .....	\$2495+orc
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**Cruiser**

Venox 250 .....	Value and looks .....	\$6199+orc
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**Scooter**

Like 125 .....	Fall in love .....	\$2995+orc
Super 8 125 .....	Cool jigger .....	\$2895+orc
Espresso 150 .....	I'll take a double shot .....	\$3199+orc
Like 200 .....	Classic performer .....	\$3495+orc
People GT300i .....	For the people .....	\$6345+orc
Downtown 300i ABS .....	All-rounder with ABS .....	\$7495+orc

**LARO**[www.laro.com.au](http://www.laro.com.au)**Road**

V Retro 250 .....	DT250 clone .....	\$2990+orc
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**Cruiser**

Cruiser 250 .....	Learner's ride .....	\$3999+orc
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**MEGELLI**[www.megelli.com](http://www.megelli.com)**Road**

250S .....	Nice looker .....	\$4250+orc
250R .....	Italian styling .....	\$4850+orc
250SE .....	Sportsbike handling .....	\$5650+orc

**MOTO GUZZI**[www.motoguzzi.com.au](http://www.motoguzzi.com.au)

Moto Guzzi prices are maximum recommended advertised ride-away price.

**Road**

V7 Stone II .....	Minimalist retro .....	\$14,000ra
V7 Special II .....	Faithful to the original V7 .....	\$14,500ra
V7 Racer SE .....	Limited edition marvel .....	\$16,000ra
1200 Sport 4V SE .....	Grunter .....	\$19,400ra
Griso 1200 8V .....	Grand slam .....	\$21,500ra

**Cruiser**

California 1400 Custom .....	Kalifornia attitude .....	\$23,000ra
California 1400 Touring .....	All a Cali should be .....	\$26,000ra

**Adv Touring**

Stelvio 1200 8V NTX ABS .....	Big brute .....	\$23,500ra
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**MV AGUSTA**[www.mvagustaimports.com.au](http://www.mvagustaimports.com.au)

All MV Agusta prices are ride-away.

**Road**

F3 675 .....	Sweet .....	\$18,490ra
F3 800 .....	Track performance .....	\$20,490ra
F3 800 Ago .....	Giacomo's replica .....	\$32,990ra
Brutale 675 EAS .....	Bit of oomph at a good price .....	\$15,990ra
Brutale 800 EAS .....	More power .....	\$17,490ra
Brutale 800 Dragster .....	Nanananana Batman! .....	\$20,490ra
Rivale 800 .....	Rivals the best urban motard .....	\$19,990ra
Brutale 1090 .....	More charm .....	\$17,990ra
Brutale 1090 .....	ABS model .....	\$19,990ra
Brutale R 1090 .....	Raw, yet refined .....	\$18,490ra
Brutale R 1090 .....	ABS model .....	\$19,490ra
Brutale RR 1090 .....	Unleash the brute within .....	\$21,490ra
Brutale RR 1090 .....	ABS model .....	\$24,490ra
Brutale 1090 Corsa .....	Top jock .....	\$28,990ra
F4 1000 .....	Beauty and the beast within .....	\$22,490ra
F4 1000 .....	ABS model .....	\$25,490ra
F4 1000 RR .....	Exotic weapon .....	\$31,990ra
F4 1000 RR .....	ABS model .....	\$35,990ra

**PGO**[www.motorsportimporters.com.au](http://www.motorsportimporters.com.au)**Scooter**

Ligero 50 .....	Good, little package .....	\$1990+orc
Ligero 150 .....	Good, small package .....	\$3290+orc
X-Hot .....	It's a hottie .....	\$3990+orc
Gmax .....	Go to the max .....	\$4700+orc

**PIAGGIO**[www.piaggio.com.au](http://www.piaggio.com.au)**Scooter**

Typhoon 125 .....	Blow you away .....	\$3120+orc
Fly 150ie .....	Buzz around the city .....	\$3490+orc
Liberty 150ie .....	Big wheel freedom .....	\$4190+orc
Beverly 350 .....	Higher performance .....	\$8690+orc
Yourban 300 .....	Leaning three-wheeler .....	\$10,290+orc
X10 500 .....	Big features .....	\$11,990+orc

**ROYAL ENFIELD**[www.royalenfieldaustralia.com](http://www.royalenfieldaustralia.com)**Road**

B5 Bullet 500 .....	Fire your guns .....	\$6995+orc
G5 Deluxe .....	She's deluxe .....	\$7445+orc
C5 Classic/Military .....	Individual style .....	\$7995+orc
C5 Chrome .....	Lots of eye candy .....	\$8495+orc



## SUZUKI

[www.suzukimotorcycles.com.au](http://www.suzukimotorcycles.com.au)

### Road

Inazuma 250	Let your inner zoomer out.....	\$4990+orc
TU250XL3	Retro learner.....	\$5990+orc
DR-Z400SM	Everyday motard.....	\$8990+orc
SFV650/LAMS	Commuting and fun duties.....	\$10,490+orc
GSX650F/LAMS	Silky smooth.....	\$10,490+orc
GSX-R600	Angry bee.....	\$14,990+orc
GSR750	Naked cracker.....	\$10,790+orc
GSX-R750	The legend continues.....	\$15,990+orc
GSX-R1000	Even lighter and faster.....	\$18,490+orc
GSX-S1000	Naked superbike for 2015.....	\$TBA
GSX-S1000F	2015's new super-tourer.....	\$TBA
GSF1250S Bandit ABS	Long-distance ease.....	\$12,990+orc
GSX1250FA	A little bit of everything.....	\$14,990+orc
GSX1300R Hayabusa	Soar like an eagle.....	\$19,290+orc

### Cruiser

VL250 Intruder	Bang that drum.....	\$6690+orc
LS650 Boulevard S40	Big single cylinder.....	\$7990+orc
VL800 C50	Traditional.....	\$10,990+orc
VL800 C50T	All-new class.....	\$12,990+orc
VZ800 M50	Neat bobber.....	\$10,990+orc
VL1500 C90T	Bad boy.....	\$17,490+orc
VLR1800 C109R	Classic looks.....	\$18,690+orc
VLR1800T C109RT	Now as a tourer.....	\$18,990+orc
VZR1800 M109R	Beaut and brutal.....	\$18,990+orc
VZR1800 M109R	Black edition.....	\$19,490+orc
VZR1800Z M109RZ	Monster energy.....	\$19,490+orc
VZR1800Z14	Special edition.....	\$19,490+orc

### Adv Touring

DL650 V-Strom	Deservedly a big seller.....	\$10,290+orc
DL650 V-Strom LAMS	Learner approved model.....	\$11,290+orc
DL650 V-Strom XT	Re-styled and updated for 2015.....	\$11,490+orc
DL650 V-Strom XT LAMS	Learner approved.....	\$10,990+orc
DL1000 V-Strom	Powerfully competent.....	\$15,490+orc

### Scooter

AN200A Burgman 200 ABS	The smallest city burger.....	\$5490+orc
AN400A Burgman ABS	A stylish maxi.....	\$10,090+orc
AN650A Burgman ABS	Overhauled.....	\$13,590+orc



■ In an increasingly competitive market, the release of the Yamaha MT-09 has pushed down pricing on other similar models such as the Suzuki GSR750, which has dropped in price to only \$10,790+orc

## SYM

[www.scoota.com.au](http://www.scoota.com.au)

### Scooter

Classic 150	Noble ride.....	\$3199+orc
VS 150	Branch away.....	\$3549+orc
Symphony 150	Sporty big wheeler.....	\$3399+orc
HD Evo 200	Whacko!.....	\$5199+orc
CityCom 300i	Practical and competitive.....	\$6099+orc

Firenze 300	Full of features.....	\$6199+orc
MaxSym 400i	Ride-away price.....	\$8449+orc

## TGB

[www.tgbscooters.com.au](http://www.tgbscooters.com.au)

### Scooter

Bellavita 125	Very chic.....	\$3990+orc
X-Race 150	You'll need knee sliders.....	\$2590+orc
Bullet 150	Small-calibre projectile.....	\$3390+orc
Xmotion 300	Smooth mover.....	\$4990+orc
Bellavita 300i	Very chic, and bigger.....	\$5490+orc

## TORINO

[www.torinomotorcycles.com.au](http://www.torinomotorcycles.com.au)

Torino ride-away prices are mostly Sydney-based and may vary elsewhere.

### Cruiser

Veloce 250	American styled.....	\$4695ra
Titan 250	Chop chop.....	\$TBA

### Scooter

Galetta Retro	Plenty of features.....	\$2195ra
Aero Sport	Cut the wind.....	\$2195ra
Famosa	City chic.....	\$2395ra
Messina Classic	New retro (Vespa) beauty.....	\$3495ra

## TRIUMPH

[www.triumphmotorcycles.com.au](http://www.triumphmotorcycles.com.au)

### Road

StreetTriple 660 LAMS	Learner-legal thrills.....	\$12,490+orc
StreetTriple 675 ABS	Streets ahead.....	\$12,990+orc
StreetTriple 675 R ABS	Even further ahead.....	\$13,990+orc
Daytona 675 ABS	Supersport gem.....	\$14,990+orc
Daytona 675R ABS	Track day heaven.....	\$16,990+orc
Bonneville	Tradition reborn.....	\$12,490+orc
Bonneville	Two tone.....	\$12,990+orc
Bonneville T100 Black	Living in the '70s.....	\$12,490+orc
Bonneville T100 A2	Nostalgia rules.....	\$14,250+orc
Bonneville T100 SE	Special edition.....	\$14,990+orc
Bonneville Newchurch SE	April 2015.....	\$12,990+orc
Bonneville T214 Land Speed LE	Coming soon.....	\$14,490+orc
Bonneville Spirit SE	April 2015.....	\$13,990+orc
Scrambler	Dirt track racer.....	\$14,390+orc
Scrambler	Two tone.....	\$14,990+orc
Thruxton	To the café!.....	\$14,390+orc
Thruxton Ace SE	Ace Café special edition.....	\$14,990+orc
SpeedTriple ABS	It's a gem.....	\$16,990+orc
SpeedTriple R ABS	Sex on wheels.....	\$19,990+orc
StreetTriple RX SE	Inspired by the Daytona 675.....	\$14,990+orc
Sprint GT	All world capabilities.....	\$15,990+orc
Trophy SE	Superb tourer.....	\$27,490+orc

### Cruiser

America	Easy urban rider.....	\$13,090ra
Speed Master	All round goodness.....	\$13,090+orc
Thunderbird ABS	Aptly named flyer.....	\$19,990+orc
Thunderbird ABSTT	Two-tone paint.....	\$19,990ra
Thunderbird Storm ABS	Thunderous.....	\$20,990+orc
Thunderbird ABS HAZE	Shine.....	\$21,990+orc
Thunderbird Commander	The bigger, tougher T-bird.....	\$21,490+orc
Thunderbird Commander TT	Two-tone paint.....	\$21,990+orc
Thunderbird LT	T-bird goes touring.....	\$23,490+orc
Thunderbird LT TT	Two-tone paint.....	\$23,990+orc
Rocket III Roadster ABS	What's not to love about 2300cc?.....	\$22,490+orc
Rocket III Touring ABS	Reasonably easy to ride.....	\$23,990+orc

### Adv Touring

Tiger 800 XR	Great all-rounder.....	\$15,090+orc
Tiger 800 XRx	Hi-tech all-rounder.....	\$16,590+orc
Tiger 800 XC	The more hardcore Tiger.....	\$16,590+orc



Tiger 800 XCx.....	Hi-tech and hardcore .....	\$17,690+orc
Tiger 1050 Sport ABS .....	More growl for the road .....	\$15,990+orc
Tiger Explorer 1200 .....	True adventure-tourer.....	\$20,490+orc
Tiger Explorer Wire Wheels.....	The tougher version .....	\$20,990+orc

**URAL**
[www.imz-ural.com.au](http://www.imz-ural.com.au)
**Road**

T .....	Cult status outfit .....	\$18,500+orc
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**Adv Touring**

Tourist.....	WWII replica.....	\$20,400+orc
BondiTourist.....	Beach to bush tourer .....	\$20,400+orc
Ranger .....	Even tougher .....	\$21,600+orc
Bondi Ranger.....	New 2014 model.....	\$21,600+orc

**VESPA**
[www.vespa.com.au](http://www.vespa.com.au)
**Scooter**

Primavera LX125 3-Valve .....	For the designer in you .....	\$5590+orc
Primavera LX150 3-Valve .....	With a bit more oomph .....	\$6290+orc
PX150 .....	The purist's ride .....	\$6490+orc
Sprint 150ie 3V .....	Sporty looks.....	\$6590+orc
GTS150ie 3V .....	Practical .....	\$6590+orc
GTS250ie FL .....	Style in a great package .....	\$7890+orc
GTS300 Super FL ABS .....	Vroom vroom .....	\$9190+orc
GTS300 Super Sport FL.....	Sportier style.....	\$9490+orc
946 Bellissima .....	Limited stock.....	\$12,990+orc

**VICTORY**
[www.victorymotorcycles.com.au](http://www.victorymotorcycles.com.au)
**All Victory prices are ride-away.**
**Cruiser**

Vegas 8 Ball .....	Sink the 8-ball .....	\$19,995ra
High-Ball .....	Ol' skool cool .....	\$20,995ra
Hammer 8 Ball .....	Hammer that 8-ball .....	\$21,995ra
Judge.....	A younger Victory.....	\$21,995ra
Gunner .....	Very cool bobber .....	\$20,995ra
Hammer S.....	Hammer it! .....	\$23,995ra
Jackpot .....	Showroom custom .....	\$24,995ra
Boardwalk Black.....	Cool classic in black .....	\$23,495ra
Cross Country .....	Comfortable touring .....	\$27,495ra
Cross Country Tour .....	Ultra-comfortable touring .....	\$29,995ra
Magnum .....	Cross country bling.....	\$29,995ra
Vision Tour.....	Space age looks .....	\$31,995ra

**VIPER**
[www.urbanmotoimports.com.au](http://www.urbanmotoimports.com.au)
**Cruiser**

Black Diamond .....	2500cc of raw grunt .....	\$54,990+orc
Diamondback .....	Cruising superpower .....	\$54,990+orc

**YAMAHA**
[www.yamaha-motor.com.au](http://www.yamaha-motor.com.au)
**Road**

YZF-R15 V2.0.....	New version 2.0.....	\$4299+orc
YZF-R3 .....	Race-replica for learners .....	\$TBA
SR400 .....	The classic single is back! .....	\$8999+orc
XJ6NL.....	New 2014 model.....	\$9799ra
XJ6NL SP.....	White edition.....	\$9999ra
FZ6R.....	Full fairing, LAM model.....	\$9999ra
FZ6R SP.....	Special edition .....	\$10,499+orc
YZF-R6 .....	WSS champ .....	\$15,999+orc
MT-03 .....	Torquey LAMS single .....	\$9999+orc
MT-07 .....	Learner legal thriller.....	\$8999+orc
FZ8N .....	Hot all-rounder .....	\$12,990+orc
FZ8S.....	Enjoy the road and corners .....	\$13,990+orc
MT-09.....	Three-cylinder thriller .....	\$11,299+orc
MT-09 ABS .....	ABS option .....	\$11,799+orc
MT-09 Tracer.....	Loony tours!.....	\$14,999+orc

TDM900.....	Mixed-up marvel.....	\$13,599+orc
FZ1N .....	Ready for anything.....	\$15,699+orc
FZ1S.....	With protection.....	\$16,499+orc
YZF-R1 .....	Discounted 2014 model .....	\$16,999+orc
XJR1300.....	Refined cool .....	\$13,999+orc
FJR1300A Touring Edition .....	Police-spec tourer.....	\$23,999+orc
FJR1300A .....	Sophisticated, sporty tourer .....	\$24,999+orc
FJR1300E.....	Electronic suspension.....	\$26,999+orc

**Cruiser**

XV250 Virago .....	Great small package .....	\$6499+orc
XVS650 Custom.....	Popular custom .....	\$10,499+orc
XVS650A Classic.....	And as a classic .....	\$10,990+orc
XVS950A .....	Mighty mid-ranger.....	\$13,999+orc
XVS950CU Bolt .....	A younger, hipper cruiser .....	\$11,999+orc
XVS950CUSB Bolt .....	R-Spec with better shocks.....	\$12,499+orc
XVS1300A.....	The pick of the bunch.....	\$15,999+orc
XVS1300ATTourer.....	With more features .....	\$18,299+orc
XVS1300 Stryker.....	Mean looking chopper.....	\$14,999+orc
XVS1300 Stryker Special .....	Matte grey .....	\$15,299+orc
XV1900A Roadliner .....	Art Deco piece.....	\$21,499+orc
XV1900AT StarTourer .....	Art with flair .....	\$24,099+orc
VMAX .....	Big, angry animal .....	\$31,299+orc

**Adv Touring**

XT250R .....	New fuel-injected model.....	\$6299+orc
XT660R.....	Seamlessly good.....	\$11,499+orc
XT660ZTénéré.....	Freedom machine .....	\$13,999ra
XT1200Z Super Ténéré.....	Leisurely rider .....	\$19,990ra
XT1200ZOE SuperTénéré.....	Outback edition.....	\$21,890+orc
XT1200ZE SuperTénéré.....	Electric suspension .....	\$21,999+orc

**Scooter**

XC125 Vity.....	Your new friend .....	\$2699+orc
YW125 .....	BW's .....	\$3399+orc
MW 125 Tricity .....	Three-wheeled leaner.....	\$4299+orc
TMAX 530 .....	Maxi now with LED lights etc .....	\$13,499+orc
TMAX 530 Iron Max .....	Mad maxi .....	\$13,999+orc


**THE MAN ON THE IRON MAX**

One of the original maxi-scooters has been updated again, and there's now a special-edition version available as well. The 2015 Yamaha TMAX not only features a few styling tweaks, it now has LED headlights, a new set of upside-down forks with radial-mount brake calipers, standard ABS, a 12V power outlet and a remote ignition system instead of the old key. The new Iron Max version comes in dark colours with gold highlights, aluminium accents and a textured two-tone seat, all for only \$500 more. Since its debut in 2001, Yamaha has sold more than 200,000 of these scooters and it's still the darling of the Euro sales charts.



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# HIGH FIVE

**T**here's a taxation company with a commercial on TV that has a motto along the lines of, "When all you do is tax, you get very good at it." It's a meaningful statement because in a day and age where the likes of Apple are threatening to build electric cars and Kawasaki builds everything from ships to superbikes, it seems diversity is increasingly becoming the key to success. But in the case of Five Gloves, that couldn't be further from the truth.

"You can't have a factory making gloves and garments," says Five Gloves founder Franck Fazio. "At the end of the day, it's just a brand. You give the production out to factories to make different things and you can't control the quality."

Franck should know about controlling quality. With a background in garment production for motorcyclists, he noticed how different management methods delivered different results.

"In the most well-known company I worked for, the owner opened the factory every morning and he closed it every night. There was only one key for the factory. He controlled the production and the quality. Times have changed and today they make many different products in different factories. There is only 24 hours in the day and if you use someone else to do the job, you can't control the quality. It is impossible."

As a result of Franck's enduring philosophy, Five Gloves only makes, well, gloves and is the only company in the world to do so. "We make gloves, other brands are also making gloves. Other brands are running a business. I am making gloves," says Franck. "To be the best, that's what you have to do. Shoei and Arai only make helmets. Other people made great helmets but then started to also make clothing. When you go outside of your core business, it doesn't work."

Five spends a lot of time and resources developing its gloves. There are many racers using the gloves, with three world championships to their name in 2014. The company also doesn't pay the riders to wear them. "Racers use my gloves for free because they like the protection," says Franck. In a world where money makes decisions, especially with top-level sportspeople, the reputation of the

product speaks volumes.

Five has a process of development much like the painting of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. "As soon as we have made a product, we aren't finished. It keeps evolving." This evolutionary process has taken the company to a point where its gloves are more complex than you would have ever imagined.

"Not many people understand that all gloves aren't the same. You can make a glove with three pieces, or you can make a glove with 180 pieces. Our race gloves consist of 180 pieces; there are 11 pieces just around the little finger!"

As you'd imagine, this sort of complexity comes at a cost, with a set of race gloves retailing for \$575. But, as Franck puts it, the value is in the production. "All of our gloves are hand-made. We have one production line for racing, and one for sport. The sewing people are specialised in what they do and they produce one race glove per worker per day, or six pairs of the sport range a day."

Not only does time and care go into production, but the quality of materials is as good as it gets. "Our product looks like many cheap gloves, but the quality is far superior. They have real carbon, DuPont Kevlar and top-quality leather. The cost of the gloves could be cheaper by \$120 with less of these features, but the quality and protection wouldn't be the same. The leather is made in a traditional tannery system, with no acceleration processes. Like a good wine, it takes a lot of time to make. The difference in leather quality comes in the time it takes to process the leather — the steps involved rather than the time.

"A cheaper leather will take five days from hide to ready for production. It uses chemicals as an acceleration process to remove the animal hair, which damages the properties of the leather. The tannery system we use takes a month, is organic so does not damage the leather properties, and also costs five times as much."

While the price may seem like a lot of money to pay for a set of gloves, there are others in the range at a lesser price that show the time and costs associated with production are quite simply reflected in

**In a world where diversity seems to be increasingly popular, there is a company concentrating on one thing only: making gloves**

the costs of the gloves.

"Obviously the cheaper gloves can't have the same level of superior protection, but they have the same fitting and design. The design is to inspire younger, more fashionable riders, perhaps city scooter riders, to wear a glove because hand protection is very important.

"Five is almost 10 years old and we are now at the point where we need to communicate to the consumer in the shop how good we are at making gloves — and not only race gloves."

Doing one thing and doing it well is a Zen habit. By doing the same thing, and nothing else, repeatedly, you get very good at it. You produce, learn, develop, improve and do it all again. And in the case of Five Gloves, that philosophy and practice couldn't be more true.

Value for money. Right product, right price. — MATT SHIELDS





# LOOKING BACK

## FLASHBACK

It's the 1950s and production at the Matchless factory on Plumstead Road, London, is marching along. The first Matchless motorcycle was produced in 1899 and the company was still going strong after the amalgamation with AJS in the 1940s and the success of its new front "Teledraulic" suspension in 1941 — the telescopic fork.

Post WWII was a boom time for Matchless. It won the inaugural world championship with Les Graham in 1949 and in the same year built its first twin. Around the same time the 350 and G80 were legendary machines for the brand, and the 50s were to see models such as the G45 and G50.

By the 1960s things were starting to look bleak for Matchless.

Influential designer Bert Hopwood went to Triumph, and Matchless and AJS suffered as a result of his absence and expertise.

By 1966, AMC — the AJS/Matchless joint venture — was bankrupt and an unsuccessful P11-model family was launched by new parent company Norton-Villiers, with a few G15s sold in 1969 to mark the end of a once pivotal brand.



## THE BIG ADVENTURE

KTM goes bigger and better with its new 1290 Super Adventure. Not only is it the most powerful production adventure bike, but it is packed with a host of safety and electronics packages not yet seen before. Woo hoo!

## LIKE A TIGER

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focused and off-road focused machines. The Tiger 800 XCx is the up-spec off-roader with different riding modes



# LOOKING FORWARD

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## ON THE ROAD

We explore two of the biggest cities either side of the Pacific Ocean — Mexico City and Sydney. In Mexico we join Mike and Denise Ferris of Ferris Wheels as they go on tour in Mexico after running their biggest year of holiday events — a whooping 13 in total for 2015!

In Sydney we leave the urban sprawl behind us and head off on a day trip starting on the Wombeyan Caves Road, just an hour-and-a-half south of the city centre.

## NOT FORGETTING ...

All the other beaut stuff and regulars you expect to see in each and every issue of ARR. See you next month!



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